





# FOURTH LETTER

TO THE

REV. WILLIAM PALMER, M.A.,

OF

WORCESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

ON THE WAY TO FIND OUT THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST  
ON EARTH, ON SATISFACTION, ON INDULGENCES,  
ON THE SUPREMACY OF THE SEE OF ROME,  
INFALLIBILITY, EUCHARIST, ETC., ETC.

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By VERAX,

A CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

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VERAX'S Works are as follows :

A Reply to the Work of the Rev. Dr. Hook of Leeds, entitled, "Friendly Advice to Roman Catholics"; to which he joined Comber's lying Tract, which the learned Manning declared "contained more lies than were ever put together in so small a space."

Letters to Dr. Hook, showing the impossibility of Believing the Scriptures except on the Authority of the Church.

Further Reply to Dr. Hook. A large Theological work.

A Short Vindication of the Church of Rome.

A Reply to Hook's Novelties of Romanism.

The Triumph of Truth; by way of Question and Answer, on all the leading points in dispute between Catholics and Protestants.

Four Letters to the Rev. Wm. Palmer, of Oxford, on the most important points of Controversy between Catholics and Protestants.

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As several letters have been left at my Publishers for me from individuals requesting to know when my work on the Divinity of Christ would be published—in reply, therefore, I beg to inform them, that it cannot be brought before the Public before a few months, as I purpose adding to it some valuable notes. This work will have the sanction of the Catholic Bishop of the London District, as, by his Lordship's appointment, an eminent Divine is now looking it over to see that it contains nothing against the doctrine and faith of the Universal Church on this most important of all points.

TO THE

REV. WILLIAM PALMER,

OF

WORCESTER COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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REV. SIR,

Every Man, come to the perfect Use of Reason, is bound to be of some Religion to serve God in, according to the Condition or Station allotted to him by the Divine Providence; and it is a concern of the highest importance not to be mistaken in the Choice of it; for nothing less than a Man's eternal Welfare depends upon it, and all is lost if he makes a false step in it. Indifference must therefore be laid aside; for he who is indifferent whether he saves his soul or not, will most certainly perish. Neither must he consult Interest, or Ease, or Education; for if he does, he will be in the utmost danger of making a wrong choice; Interest and Ease will press hard upon him to embrace that Religion which favors them most, whether it be the true one or not; and Education, if it be allowed to determine a Man in the Choice of his religion, will fix him as immovably in Judaism, Mahometanism, Socinianism, or Quakerism, as in the true Church of Christ. No man, therefore, ought to consider whether the Church whereof he is a member, be the Church of the Country where he is born; whether it be most favorable to his Interest, Liberty, and Ease; or, finally, whether it be the Church in which he is most likely to make his fortune; but his whole Examination ought to be of this one single point, viz.—whether it be the true Church of Christ, in which alone salvation can be attained.

But how is it possible for the greatest part of mankind, such as Merchants, Soldiers, Tradesmen, Servants, or Day-labourers, who are usually of narrow capacities in relation to Things out of their proper Sphere, destitute of Learning, and embarked in the Cares and Solitudes of this Life, how is it possible, I say, for these to be duly qualified for this all

important Choice? The Reason of the Difficulty is plain,—because there is but one Faith, according to St. Paul, and but one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, according to the Nicene Creed; whereas there are innumerable other Churches which all pretend to be the true Church of Christ. Lutherans say they are this Church; Calvinists say the same; Independents, Anabaptists, Quakers, and many more put likewise in their claim; and the Church of Rome condemns all these, and says she is the only true Church upon Earth. And is it then possible for ignorant Laics, amidst the daily hurry of Business and Throng of Temporal Concerns, to have either Leisure or Capacity to inform themselves exactly of all the disagreeing systems of so many Churches at variance with one another; to examine to the Bottom the Grounds of their several Pretensions; the Truth or Falsehood of their particular doctrine wherein they are divided; and all the Reasons and Scriptural Texts that appear to be for or against them? Nothing can be plainer than that this is morally impossible; and so we must conclude the greatest part of mankind is in no condition to find the true Church, or determine themselves in the Choice of their Religion by this sort of Examination, which entirely surpasses their Capacity.

It is, however, certain, that since Christ has established upon Earth a Church for the salvation of Men of all States and Conditions, whether Poor or Rich, Servants or Masters, Learned or Unlearned, it must be possible for Men of all States to distinguish the true Church of Christ from such other Churches as form no part of it; for otherwise they would not have it in their power either to mend their choice, if they have already made a bad one, or to make a right choice, if by the misfortune of their education they should be engaged in a wrong way; or even to know that they are in the true Church, when the divine Providence has effectually bestowed that Blessing on them. Hence it follows, that there must be some other way besides the Examination of particular Points of Doctrine, for ignorant People either to make a rational Choice of their Religion, or to fix them with an entire Security in the Religion they have received by Education, in Case it be their Happiness to have been brought up in the true one.

But what way is there proportioned to their Capacities to discern the only one true Church from so many others which all pretend to be this one true church?—I answer, there are a great number of general Arguments, plain and

easy to be understood, which mark out the true Church as clearly as a Pillar set up at the meeting of several roads directs Travellers to the way they are to take; and there are likewise some general Principles by which a false Church may be known as clearly as rocks and shelves under Water are known by the Marks set up to warn Seamen against them. Let us then suppose a Person is deliberating whether he shall embrace the Roman Catholic Faith, or continue a Member of the Church wherein he has been educated;—I assure him he will stand in no Need of Learning to make a right Choice, but only of some natural good sense, and a hearty Resolution to save his Soul, if he will but weigh with Attention and without prejudice the following general Considerations I shall here lay before him:—First, there are in the Gospels the fullest and plainest Promises of a perpetual infallibility made by Christ to his Church, as will appear from the following Texts:—Upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it—(Matt. xvi. 18.); I will ask my Father, and he will send you another Comforter to abide with you for ever—(John xiv. 16.); The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all Things, and bring all things to your Remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you—(John xiv. 26.); I have yet many things to say unto you; but you cannot hear them now. However, when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will lead you into all Truth—(John xvi. 13.); And behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the World—(Matt. xxviii. 20.); all which is confirmed by St. Paul calling the Church of Christ “the Pillar and Ground of Truth.” Nothing surely can be stronger for the Proof of an infallible Church than these Texts. There must, therefore, be such a Church upon Earth, if Christ has been true to his Word.

Now all the Reformed Churches in the World unanimously own themselves to be fallible. It follows, therefore, that the Roman Catholic Church alone is the infallible Church of Christ, as she has always maintained her claim to that title. And surely a Christian, who seriously resolves to save his soul, will choose an infallible Church for his Guide rather than a fallible one.

Secondly.—Protestants generally accuse us of a want of Charity, in Denying the Possibility of Salvation to any but those of our own Communion. I presume, then, their Charity is more extensive than ours; for otherwise it

would be ridiculous to declaim against us for the Want of it; and so they can do no less than to allow the Possibility of Salvation to Roman Catholics. That is to say, they are convinced in their hearts, that Roman Catholics may be saved in their Religion; because otherwise it would be no charity to tell them so, any more than it would be a charity to tell a Man that he can be saved in a damnable State.

Now in a Dispute about the Truth of revealed Mysteries which are above our understanding, and which consequently cannot be decided by the Force of human Reason, it cannot be doubted but the safest and wisest Course we can take to secure the Salvation of our Souls is to depend upon the greatest authority upon Earth. And, therefore, since the Authority of both Catholics and Protestants joined together is greater than that of Protestants alone, it follows plainly, that it is both safest for any Man to choose the Roman Catholic Church preferably to any of the Reformed Churches, which alone allow Salvation to be attainable in their own Communion; whereas the declared enemies of the Roman Catholic Church allow it to be attainable in the Communion of that Church—(remark their inconsistency in this respect). Catholics, therefore, cannot be suspected of partiality in their own cause relating to this point, because they have their very Enemies on their side; but Protestants may be suspected of partiality, because they are the sole Judges in their own Cause, and have not only the whole Body of Roman Catholics now extant in the World, but the Authority of all the Councils, Bishops, and Pastors of the Catholic Church for fifteen ages before the Reformation against them. Mr. Lesly, in his Case Stated, is pleased to call this a childish Argument; but I have not yet seen a solid Answer to it.

Thirdly.—There are numberless Examples of Persons brought up Protestants from their Infancy who, in their last Sickness, have embraced the Catholic Faith.—A no less Man than King Charles II. was one of these.—(See the Rev. Mr. Huddleston's account of the death of this Sovereign, as it was this Holy Priest who attended him in his last moments.) But I dare boldly challenge Protestants to produce one single example of a person, brought up from his Infancy in the Roman Catholic Faith, who ever changed his Religion upon his death-bed. Whence I conclude, that even in the Judgment of many Persons brought up with a Prejudice to us, it is safer dying a Catholic than a Protestant; and then I am sure it is likewise safer to live in the



Catholic Church ; because many who have had a design of dying Catholics, have been justly disappointed either by a sudden Death, or the want of Opportunity to be reconciled in their last Sickness.

Fourthly.—Whereas great numbers of Protestants, by becoming Catholics, have not only changed their Religion, but also laid aside their bad Habits ; and from Libertines, as they were before, have become sober and good Christians ; nay, even embraced the Austerities of a religious State. I never heard of any Catholic who, upon his turning Protestant, ever became either more sober, more chaste, more just, more charitable, or pious than he was before. On the contrary, the lives of those who fall from the Catholic Religion are generally so disedifying, and sometimes even so scandalous, that they are a dishonour rather than a credit to the Church they had come over to. Nay, in the very Beginning of the Reformation it was notoriously remarkable, that Libertinism and Impiety encreased proportionably as Luther's and Calvin's new Gospel made its Progress ; which the Reader will find proved with the utmost evidence from Protestant Testimonies. I refer my readers to "A Short History of the Beginning and Progress of the Protestant Religion," gathered out of the best Protestant Writers, by the Right Rev. Dr. Challoner.

But is it any wonder that Persons, broke loose from the whole Restraints of Confessing and punishing their Sins, should be more easily carried away by all the Inclinations of Corrupt Nature, than they who believe themselves bound in Conscience to confess their most secret sins, to perform the Penance imposed upon them, to restore whatever they possess unjustly, to make Reparation of Honour, if they have wronged their Neighbour in his Fame, and to avoid all the immediate Occasions of Relapses ? It is morally impossible it should be otherwise ; and it follows from it, that Roman Catholics, who are under all these and many more Restraints, must consequently be in a safer way to Heaven, than they who have none of these Restraints laid upon them. I hope, however, no one will suspect I pretend to accuse modern Protestants of directly encouraging Libertinism or Vice by any positive Principle of their religion ; for I should wrong them if I did ; but what I say is, that they have deprived themselves of the most powerful remedy against Vice by Reforming away the Sacrament of Penance, which we may properly call the strongest Fence about the Law ;

and this being pulled down by the Reformation, there is no need of Encouraging the People to break in upon God's Commandments.

It suffices that the Restraints of Shame and Fear,—the one of Confessing, the other of punishing their sins,—are removed far from them; because Corrupt Nature thus set at Liberty will after that act its own part, and will rush into Vice and depravity. Does not Calvin say,—“What else did the greater part pretend to but by shaking off the the yoke of superstition to give themselves more liberty to follow all kinds of lasciviousness?”—(L. de Scandalis.)

Fifthly.—A motive which sufficed to fix so great and learned a man as St. Augustine in the Religion he had chosen, is surely no weak one, and may suffice to direct any Man, whether learned or unlearned, in the choice he has to make. Let us then hear his own words:—“Lastly,” says he, “the very name of Catholic holds me; of which this Church alone has not without Reason so kept the Possession; that though all Heretics desire to be called Catholics, yet, if a stranger asks them where Catholics meet, no Heretic dare to point out his own House or Church.” But what church is it, in which St. Augustine was held stedfast by the very name of Catholic? His words immediately preceding are a full answer to this question. “Thirdly (says he).—A succession of Bishops descending from the See of Saint Peter, to whom Christ after his resurrection committed his Flock, holds me in the Church.”—(Contra Epist. Fund c. 4.) It is plain, then, it was the Church in communion with the See of Rome that St. Augustine had chosen for his Guide; it was in this Church he was held by the very name of Catholic; because she had always had, and has had ever since, so full and undisputed a Possession of this honourable Title, that no communion separated from her was ever able either to gain it to itself, or dispossess her of it.

But what means the word Catholic? It is a Greek word and signifies the same as Universal. And this is so essential a Condition of the true Church, that no society upon earth can pretend to be a part of it, unless it belong to the Communion of that Church which has Universality both of Time and Place.—Of time, by being the standing Church of all Ages since the Time of the Apostles; and of Place, by having on its side the agreement of people and nations, according to St. Augustin's expression; both which Parts of the Church's Universality are clearly marked out in the word of God.

Her universality of Time is marked out by Christ promising his Apostles, that the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it—(Matt. xvi. 18); And that he will be with them always even unto the end of the world—(Matt. xxviii. 19, 20); and by Isaiah in these prophetic words: This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: my spirit that is upon thee, and my words, which I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.—(Isa. lix. 20. 21.) Her universality of Place marked out first by God's promise to Abraham, that all nations of the earth should be blessed in his seed—(Gen. xxii. 18.); thirdly, by the Psalmist,—Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine Inheritance, and the uttermost Parts of the Earth for thy Possession—(Psalm ii. 8.); and again,—Praise the Lord all ye Nations, praise the Lord all ye people—(Psalm cxvii. 1.); thirdly, by Isaiah describing the future Glory of the Church of Christ in the Multitude of people and Nations flocking to her—(Isa. lx.); and lastly, by Christ himself giving a Commission to the Apostles and their Successors to go and teach all Nations—(Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) Here, then, it behoves you, Rev. Sir, to examine impartially, whether these two parts of Universality are to be found in the Church of Rome, or in any of the Reformed Churches; because in whatever Church they are found, it cannot be doubted but that is the true Church of Christ.

As to the Church of Rome, that is to say, the Church in communion with the See of Rome, she has not only had an uninterrupted visible Being from the time of the Apostles to this Day, but has always been the most Illustrious Society of Christians upon earth. She has, therefore, the Universality of Time promised by Christ, and foretold by Isaiah. She has likewise preached the Gospel to the most remote and barbarous nations in the world, who have all received the Faith of Christ from her Bishops and Pastors; and not only they, but likewise those very nations of Europe, in which the Reformed Churches are now established; as England, Scotland, Ireland, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, and the Protestant parts of Germany and Switzerland. For all these were converted from Heathenism to Christianity, by Missionaries sent by the Church of Rome; as is manifest from their unanimous profession of the Religion called Popery for several ages after their conversion, till the pretended Reformation.—Nay, she has at this very time

Bishops and Pastors propagating the Gospel amongst the Infidels, both of the East and West Indies. Therefore Universality of Place, or, as St. Augustine calls it, the agreement of People and Nations, cannot possibly be denied her. But can any of the Reformed Churches lay claim to this Universality either of Time or Place? Alas! it is but three hundred and odd years ago since the very first of them began to creep out of the shell; and it was some years after, before the rest came into the world. It is plain, then, that the very oldest of them wants near fifteen hundred years of Universality of Time. And as to Universality of Place, I should be glad to know what barbarous or heathen nation has ever been converted by Missionaries of any of the Reformed Churches; though they have all the opportunity imaginable to do it, by Reason of the great trade several of them have, both in the East and West Indies. Nay, is there any one of those Churches that ever extended itself beyond what we may properly call a Corner of the Earth, comparatively to the large extent, both in and out of Europe, of the Roman Catholic Church? This, therefore, makes it likewise plain, that they have no Universality of Place; and being all separated from the Communion of the Church of Rome, which has Universality both of Time and Place, they can form no part of the Catholic Church, nor have any claim to that Honourable Title; the consequence whereof is, that they are no part of the True Church, in which alone Salvation can be obtained, according to this saying of Christ,—If he will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen and a Publican—(Matt. xviii. 17.); that is, let him be regarded as a Reprobate, or one in a damnable state.

Sixthly.—The Reformed Churches, not one excepted, are either guilty of Schism, or no Church in the world was ever guilty of it. Nay, we may confidently say they have the plainest marks of Schismatical Churches that are possible for a Church to have—for what is Schism but an obstinate and wilful separation from the communion of the true Church of God? Now the first Reformers boasted openly that they had separated themselves from the Whole World, and it is a matter of fact that they did so. If, therefore, God has always had a true Church upon Earth, as I take it to be an undeniable truth he has, the consequence is, that they had separated themselves from the true Church as well as from other Churches, which surely is sufficient to convince any man that his soul cannot be safe in any of the Reformed Churches.

Seventhly.—There can be no true Church, but what has its origin from Christ and his Apostles; and this is likewise a truth which cannot be contested. Now it is a plain historical Fact, that the Reformation began near upon fifteen hundred years after the ascension of Christ, that is, anno 1517, and consequently that there were none of the present Reformed Churches in the World before that time; because there could be no Reformed Churches before the Reformation, which gave them their birth. And how then can any of these Churches pretend to be a part of the true one, that is, of the Church established by Christ and his Apostles? Did they incorporate themselves with any pre-existent Church, that was a part of the true one? No, they separated themselves from the whole world; they therefore began upon a new Establishment, and are no more a part of any Christian Church that was before them, than they are a part of the Jewish Synagogue; and so they can be no part of the Church founded by the Apostles, which was surely before them.

If any one pretends that the Reformed Church, whereof he is a member, has always had a Being, though it has not been always visible to men, I really pity his case, and advise him as a friend to give up the cause honestly and fairly, rather than have recourse to such a wretched shift for its defence, which in reality is a cover for the most ridiculous Sect upon Earth. For who will pretend to defeat an invisible Host? And so a Muggletonian or a Quaker will be as safe behind his entrenchment of an invisible Church, and with the help of this ingenious invention trace the origin of his Church to Christ and his Apostles as easily as any Reformed Church in Europe.

Eighthly.—There can be no security of Salvation in a Church whose very Rule of Faith is an inexhaustible source of divisions, errors, and contradictions. Now whereas the Catholic Rule of Faith is the Word of God as interpreted for us by the Church of Christ; that of the Reformed Churches is Scripture interpreted by private judgment. So that the guide of Catholics is the greatest authority upon Earth; and the guide of Protestants is every man's private judgment—because whoever appeals to the Scriptures, and throws aside the Church's interpretation of them, appeals effectually to his own private judgment, and acknowledges no other guide—which I justly call an inexhaustible source of divisions, errors, and contradictions; and I need not insist upon any other proof of it than the

numberless jarring Sects, all spawned from the Reformation, which set up this pernicious Rule, and soon saw the natural fruits of it in as monstrous a Babel of confusion, as the infinite diversity of private judgments must unavoidably produce.\* And so I leave every man of common sense to judge whether (considering the sublimeness of Divine Mysteries on the one hand, and the narrow compass of human Reason, together with its proneness to be biassed by interest or prejudice, on the other), whether, I say, persons be not safer as to their eternal Salvation under the conduct of Pastors, who reject a Rule which is the fruitful source of errors, and adhere to the authority established by

\* The Reformation became at length a mere Proteus, and changed its shape as often as a stage player changes his dress. Luther began the Farce, and expected all should at best be but Actors under him, and dance to his pipe. But Carolostadius, Zuinglius, and Calvin looked on themselves to be as able Reformers as Luther, and so thought fit to reform his Reformation; nay, they all reformed their own Reformations backward or forward just as the fancy took them. The Church of England reformed not only her own Mother Church, but all the Reformations that had got the start of her; and a new scene of Reformation appeared every where in Great Britain as often as new Reformers mounted the stage. The Reformation of Henry the 8th, was reformed by Edward the 6th, and his by Queen Elizabeth—whose superior genius not being fully satisfied with any thing that had been done before her, by the force of her own ingenuity fabricated a new Religion of a kind of linsey-wolsey texture, made up of several fragments of Lutheranism and Calvinism, and some pieces of Popery to make a shew with. For which reason the Presbyterians thought themselves bound in conscience to reform the Reformation of Queen Elizabeth. The Fanatics and Independents after that reformed the Presbyterians, and the Brownists and Quakers have reformed them all.

Here we see a complete Babel of jarring Reformations, chopping and changing, building and destroying, doing and undoing; and all these changes, incoherencies, and contradictions flowing from a Principle settled by the first Reformers, and still maintained by the Reformed Churches, as is manifest from Mr. Lesly's "Case Stated," where he has these remarkable words: "Private Judgment is all we have for the Belief of a God and of Christ—in short, we must trust to it in every thing without exception. Nay, the doctrine of private judgment in opposition to Church authority is so essentially necessary to support the whole building of the Reformation, that whoever gives it up must at the same time give up the Reformation itself." Now I ask whether a principle, which is an inexhaustible source of confusion, incoherencies, Heresies, and Schisms, can be a doctrine according to the word of God? If it be, we must join issue with Calvin's blasphemy in teaching that God is the author of Sin. But I have now said enough to make it plain, that the two first marks of an extraordinary vocation, viz., Holiness of Life, and Purity of Doctrine, were wholly wanting in the first Reformers.

Christ himself for our guide, than they that are guided by Ministers, who by a fundamental principle of their Religion are bound to own, that Scriptures interpreted by private judgment is the only Rule of their Faith.

Ninthly.—No man can hope to work out his Salvation in a Church which has no lawful Ministry. That is, no lawful power to preach the Word, and administer the Sacraments. And

Tenthly.—The only Church in which a Christian can hope to work out his Salvation is that which derives its doctrine from Christ and his Apostles.

Now that none of the Reformed Churches have a lawful Ministry, is as clear as day, Rev. Sir, and likewise that the Roman Catholic Church is the only Church upon Earth that derives its doctrine from Christ and his Apostles, is equally clear to every unprejudiced person; the undeniable consequence therefore is, 1st, That Salvation cannot be hoped for in any of the Reformed Churches; and 2nd, That it can only be attained in that Church which is in communion with the See of Rome.

I know well that one of the great pretexts which prevents Protestants from returning to the bosom of the Catholic Church, is, their repugnance to believe that the Sacrament of the Eucharist contains the Body and Blood of the Son of God. I shall here bring forward two strong and weighty reasons to shew the evil of it. 1st. It is in reality justifying the Socinians and Arians, &c., &c., in their opposition to the Christian Religion, for there is nothing so difficult to believe as the great Fundamental Truths of Christianity: as the Trinity of Persons in God, without increasing the Divinity; the Incarnation of the Son of God; His Death for the Redemption of Mankind; His Resurrection which happened three days after; and that of all mankind, which will take place at the end of the world. All these truths appeared incredible to the Jews and Pagans, and appear the same to the Free Thinkers of this day, who cannot and will not believe them, because, they exclaim, they are contrary to our reason. The Cross of Christ, says St. Paul, is a stumbling block to the Jews, and a sport to the Gentiles. This repugnance to believe, nevertheless, was not justified by him, on the contrary, he condemned their obstinacy: "*Qui non crediderit condemnabitur.*" "He that will not believe will be condemned." It is therefore most true to say, that this repugnance which Protestants shew to believe in this great Truth, will not justify them in

refusing to believe it, otherwise all the Ancient Heretics who have held doctrines contrary to those of the Church would at once be justified in so doing. For example: the Donatists could not conceive how a man who has neither Grace or Faith could give it to another in baptism, and how a soul possessed by the Devil by heresy could drive away the spirit of darkness by exorcisms which he performs on the person that was baptized; these were the great errors of the Donatists. The Arians could not conceive how the Son of God was equal to his Father, and that he had the same Divinity with him. They produced many texts of Sacred Scripture to support their opinions, their repugnance however did not justify them. The Nestorians had also a great disinclination to believe, a God made Man, a God who had been a Child, a God who was a Mortal, and a suffering and a dying God. They were however condemned as great Heretics. And the Reformers of the 16th century, never can justify their repugnance in believing in this great mystery any more than those above-mentioned Heretics, who were all condemned by the Church. Why then do Protestants assent to other Mysteries which the Catholic Church teaches, and which are in fact infinitely more difficult to believe than that of the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament, after He has said, *This Is My Body?* (I shall enter at large on this great point in a future letter.) Is it more difficult to believe, I ask again, than the Trinity and the Incarnation? And if this repugnance did not justify these ancient Heretics in refusing to place belief in them, how then, in the name of Heaven, can the pretended Reformers of the 16th century justify themselves any more than they did in refusing to believe this great question, that question of questions on which depends the Salvation of Millions; and it is most astonishing that Martin Luther himself, the parent of this pretended Reformation, declares that the Holy Fathers of the Church are unanimous in the belief of the Real Presence of Christ in this Sacrament of the Eucharist, and which has ever been the doctrine of the Catholic and Apostolic Church. It must therefore be confessed, that the same general rule which condemned all those ancient Heretics, in like manner, condemns the Reformers of the 16th century and their followers.

My second reason is, that the great truths of the Christian Faith are not known to us by the light of reason, but by divine Revelation; when therefore we wish to know



them, we must not be tormenting ourselves to ascertain if they be conformable to reason, but if they be revealed by God, because if the Almighty has revealed them, it is most certain that we are obliged to believe them, notwithstanding every difficulty which reason may throw in the way—it being most true, that whatever God has revealed cannot be false; and in like manner we cannot be better assured of a truth, than when God is the author of it, however impossible it may appear to reason; we cannot and ought not to penetrate into the power of God. This is the reason why the Christian religion insists upon our subjecting our understandings to the mysteries of Faith, and not seeking arguments to call them in question. As St. Paul says: “*In captivitatem redigentes omnem intellectum in obsequium Christi.*” (2 Cor. v.) We must therefore believe every truth which is revealed by God, and we must overcome by this infallible authority all repugnance to place belief in it. I may here be asked, how are we to know whether a truth be revealed or not? My reply is, we must consult the Church, to whom God has confided the interpretation of his Holy word, and promised ever to guide Her into all truth. This is the way which the Saviour of mankind has commanded us to follow, in order to be instructed in the mysteries of Faith, and of all those truths which He wishes us to believe. This is the way the Christian Religion has ever surmounted all the great difficulties she meets with in regard to the mysteries of Faith, and thus overcomes all repugnance to believe in them. It is by this submission to the Catholic Church, that Ground and Pillar of Truth, that Catholics have replied to all the arguments brought forward by the Arians against the Divinity of the Son of God, and which they have not only drawn from reason, but from a great number of passages of the Sacred Scriptures wrongfully interpreted. I may assert the same in regard to the Nestorians, the Eutychions, and all other Heretics. In fine, without this authority of the Church which interprets the word of God, and without that submission which Catholics ever pay to their Holy Mother the Catholic Church, no heresy would be condemned, no truth would be established, even these which all Christians allow to be fundamental. It would necessarily follow, that every one would be at liberty to follow his whims and fancies in rejecting or believing what he pleased. Thus would soon dwindle into nothing all the great mysteries of the Christian Religion, such as the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Resur-

rection, &c., &c. It must therefore be confessed that this repugnance which they have to believe certain points of Catholic doctrine, never can justify them before God; for God has commanded us to hear the Church, therefore we ought to believe all she believes, and condemn all that she condemns, notwithstanding this repugnance, and by this sincere and wise submission renounce every thing contrary. As Vincent of Lirens said, in the year 430, about the time of the Council of Ephesus: "They must endeavour to unlearn what they have badly learnt, and of all the dogmas of Faith let them comprehend as much as they can, but they must believe those which they cannot understand." (Vincent Lirens, in Comm. cap. 25.)

In conclusion, Rev. Sir, I beg to say that all the endeavours I have used to set this whole matter in its clearest light will perhaps displease such insincere souls as hate the light because it incommodes them, But I hope they will be acceptable to all sincere lovers of the truth, whatever persuasion they are of; and it is for this reason alone that I have addressed these letters to you, which have no other object in view, than to mark out to them the way of truth and Salvation, that they either may walk on steadily in that way, if they find themselves already in it, or enter into it if choice or education has misled them into a wrong path.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

VERAX,

*A Catholic Layman.*

P.S.—True Religion is only one, and not manifold; for there is but one verity, one Faith, one Baptism, one God, and one Lord of all things (Ephes. iv.); consequently it follows, first, that all Religion, all Faith, all Confessions of Faith, besides this only one, are false, hurtful, and pestilential—brought in by the Devil, the author thereof, and who is the Father of Lies. Secondly. No man who does not possess this one only Faith, can possibly obtain everlasting salvation, although otherwise he may live ever so well. (See 1 Cor. xiii.) "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth

me nothing." May with better reason be spoken of true Faith and Religion, which is the very foundation of charity, and of all other Christian virtues; for as the Apostle declares, without Faith it is impossible to please God. It is a very great error of certain simple people, who think it enough, to ensure their salvation, to believe only in Christ, and that he died for their Sins, although they reject five of his Sacraments, the Sacrifice of the Altar, and many other points of Faith essential to Salvation. If it were not necessary to believe what the Church commands, all those condemned Heretics, such as the Montanists and Novatians, the Donatists and Sabellians, the Arians, Macedonians, Eutichians, Menethelites, and such like pests of the Church, would be as well entitled to Salvation as those holy Saints, such as Augustine, Ambrose, Cyprian, Chrysostome, &c., &c., and who are now enjoying for ever the beatic vision. (See Tit. iii. 10.) "A man that is an Heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid; knowing that he, that is such a one, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment." Is not this condemning the great principle of the Reformation, viz., Private Judgment. (See also Tim. ii.) The illustrious St. Augustine says: "Let us imagine a man to be chaste, continent, not covetous, not a server of idols, liberal to the poor, no man's enemy, not contentious, patient, quiet, emulating, or envying no man, sober, frugal, &c., but yet an Heretic; let no one have a doubt but that such a one, for this only thing, that he is an Heretic, shall not possess the Kingdom of God." (August. l. 4, Cont. Donat. cap. 8.)

Let us now see if there be any thing like the doctrine of exclusive Salvation maintained by the Protestant Churches; to begin with the Established Church of Scotland, the 16th article of her original Confession runs thus: "As we believe in one God, so do we most constantly believe that there has been, now is, and to the end shall be, one Kirk, out of which Kirk neither life nor eternal felicity is to be hoped for or had, and therefore we utterly abhor the blasphemy of those who affirm, that men who live according to equity and justice shall be saved in whatever Religion they may have lived." This is exclusion with a vengeance, Rev. Sir, but lest this confession should be now considered as antiquated or out of date, read the 2nd Section of the 25th Chapter of the Westminster Confession: "The visible Church, which is also Catholic or Universal (not confined to one nation as before under the whole law), consists of all

those throughout the world that profess the true Religion, together with their children, and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house of the family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of Salvation."

Now Catholics either profess the true Religion or they do not. If they do not, then they are not of the Church of Christ, and according to this article cannot be saved by any ordinary possibility. If they do, the Church of Scotland herself is in error, by separating herself from the Catholic Church; as an argument *ad ecclesiam*, this reasoning is irresistible.

The 18th of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England is in strict accordance with the 16th of the old Confession of the Scottish Kirk; this Article (the 18th) asserts: "That they also are to be accursed that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law, or sect, which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature." See also the 27th Article of the Protestant Belgian Confession, anno 1561, approved of by the Synod of Dort in 1619: "We believe one holy Catholic and Universal Church; it will continue till time shall be no more. This Society and congregation is the Society of those who are to be saved, and there is no Salvation *out of it*." In the French Protestant Catechism (Amsterdam Edition of 1710), on the Ministers asking the Child, "Why is the article of the creed respecting the forgiveness of Sins placed next to those of the Church?" the answer is, "Because no one obtains pardon of his Sins who is not incorporated with the people of God and the unity of the Church." Minister: "So then, my child, out of the church there is nothing but death and damnation." Answer: "Without doubt; for those who separate and form a Sect apart can never expect Salvation whilst they so continue."

This is a strange answer coming from a body which had formed "a Sect apart" by separating from the Church. Notwithstanding the anti-exclusiveness which runs through the Protestant Confessions, many individual Protestants have readily admitted that true Christianity is to be found in the Catholic Church, and that Catholics may be saved, such as Luther, the learned Hooker, in his Ecclesiastical Polity, Bishop White, in the Defence of his Way, p. 356, Doctor Barro, &c., &c.

## NOTES.

## ON SATISFACTION.

## NOTE I.

I REPLY to the letter which the Rev. J. G. Bringly has addressed to me on Satisfaction, as follows: That satisfaction, which Protestants are taught to believe is of no avail, is nevertheless plain in Scripture; as first, that after the Sin has been pardoned, that is, in regard of our reconciliation to God, and free from Eternal Punishment, yet there remains a liability to temporal punishment, as appears in the person of King David, when, after he had repented, and God had pardoned his sins, yet he punished one Sin with the death of his child, and another with three days Pestilence. 2 Kings xii. 13, 14, and xxiv. 10, 12, 13, 14 (Vulgate). Nor can this punishment be only for admonition and not for justice, seeing that the Text says it was, "Because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." Moses and Aaron both died in God's favour, yet were punished with death before they entered the land of Canaan, for their offence at Maribab. Now where death is the punishment, it cannot be intended for admonition and amendment of life, but as a scourge for their offences. The Psalmist plainly says: "Thou wast a merciful God to them; and taking vengeance on all their inventions." (Psal. xcix. 8.) If he forgave them, why did he punish them. He forgave the Eternal punishment, and inflicted the temporal. Also the Apostle says: "And to whom you have forgiven any thing, I also. For what I forgive, if I have forgiven any thing, for your sakes have I done it in the person of Christ." (2 Cor. ii. 10.) The Apostle here granted an Indulgence, or pardon, in the person and by the authority of Christ to the incestuous Corinthian, whom before he had put under Penance; which pardon consisted in releasing him from a part of the temporal punishment due to his Sin.

God pardoned Adam our first progenitor, as appears from the Book of Wisdom; but still after this reconciliation he was not exempted from that dreadful curse: "Because thou hast given ear to the voice of thy wife, accursed be the Earth in thy work." Moreover the Apostle (1 Cor. xi. 29, 30, 31, 32) makes mention of certain persons punished with death and grievous diseases because they received unworthily, although some of them (as we may plainly suppose) were reconciled to God before their departure. But to be as concise as I possibly can in regard to particular examples, permit me here to ask, do not all mankind feel the bitter scourge and calamity of Sin, such as hunger, cold, sickness, and death, the just penalties of our Father Adam's transgression. Notwithstanding many have had the guilt washed away by the Sacrament of Baptism. Therefore St. Augustine truly says: "Productior est Pœna quàm culpa ne Parva putaretur culpa, &c." (S. August. Tract 124, in Joan.) "The Punishment is more prolonged than the fault, least the fault might be thought too slightly of if the Punishment ended with it." St. Irenæus writing upon the punishments inflicted upon Adam, Eve, and their posterity, asserts: "They were thus chastised, that neither accursed they might wholly perish, and be abandoned of God; nor without correction, might persevere in contemning God." (Iren. L. 3, cap. 35.) An eminent Catholic Divine, commenting on the words which I have quoted of the Apostle (2 Cor. xi. 10), truly says: "Which words cannot have any reference to the remission of the fault, seeing that it was pardoned before by his great sorrow, mentioned in verse 7, but must be meant of the temporal punishment, which was imposed in the name of Jesus Christ." This fact Calvin does not deny, and Beza, upon this place, says, that the abatement of this rigour was afterwards called an Indulgence; Mr. Field calls satisfaction "An Heresy of the Papists"; and Mr. Fulke (Fulke, in c. 8, ad Rom. sect. 4, and in Ca. 2, 2 ad Cor. sect. 2) calls it a "Horrible blasphemy

against the effects of Christ's Passion"; but such a blasphemy the Son of God himself was accused of by the Scribes and Pharisees, and of such a heresy as this Tertullus the Jewish orator accused St. Paul. Therefore we confess with him, "That according to the way which they call heresy, so do I serve the Father, and my God, believing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets" (Acts xxiv. 14); where it is often recorded, that the Divine Majesty has justly inflicted upon some, temporal punishment, though the whole debt of sin be discharged.

God pardoned the Sister of Moses, and received her into his favor, yet he punished her notwithstanding with fifteen days leprosy. After the departure of the Jews from Egypt, they adored the golden calf, often complaining against God; his Divine Majesty however pardoned them, but still he condemned them to wander fifty years in the desert, and never to enter into the promised land. (Numbers xiv. 20, 21, 22, 23.) All these Sins were pardoned by the virtue of the satisfaction of Christ, yet still we see what severe penances God required from those who had committed them; but the Almighty even went farther than this, for he commands the Sinner to inflict on himself this rigorous Penance, and consequently it is most necessary. He orders us to do Penance as the Ninivites did. (St. Matt. xii. 41; St. Luke xi. 32.) St. John the Baptist prescribes for all those who went into the desert, to "Bring forth therefore worthy fruits of Penance" (St. Luke iii. 8, 11); which means alms and other exterior satisfactory works. "Now therefore saith the Lord: Be converted to me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning." "Let the Bridegroom go forth from his bed, and the Bride out of her bride-chamber." (Joel ii. 12, 16.) St. Paul also recommends these exterior works, Fasting and Watching: "In stripes, in prisons, in seditions, in labours, in watchings, in fastings." (2 Cor. vi. 5.) And again: "And if Sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ; yet so if we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him."

Now it is certain that our blessed Saviour by his prayers obtained of God all the gifts and graces which are bestowed upon men, and yet he commanded us to ask and to pray, and by prayer to obtain the very same things which he before by his prayers procured; so although he has perfectly satisfied for all our offences, he likewise requires some satisfactory works on our parts in behalf of ourselves and in honor of his Father, without any injury or extortion whatever. It is certain that Christ by his humble obedience to his Father, glorified him as much as we dishonoured him by our sins. Notwithstanding Mr. Field, in his Fifth Book of the Church, c. 17, p. 55, says: "Touching Sin, considered in the nature of an offence and wrong, and the things to pacify God's wrath in that respect, there is no question, but the sinner himself that wronged God in sinning, must by sorrow of heart, disliking and detesting, and by confession of mouth, condemning former evils, restore that glory to God he took from him, and seek and take all occasions the weakness of his means will afford, to glorify God as much as he dishonoured him before." Oh Incomprehensible Truth, which so often forces her very enemies to speak in her favour. Christ restored to his Father all the honor which we deprived him of by sin, and yet it is no injury to Christ, no exaction of God; "The Sinner himself restores that glory he took from him." It is no offence according to Mr. Field (one of the most eminent Divines of the Anglican Church), who says: "He glorifieth God as much as he dishonoured him before." "And there is no question," continues he, "but these things are required to pacify God's wrath," fully pacified by the Blood of Christ. Then there can be no doubt, I assert without fear of contradiction, that God may be satisfied by our weak endeavours, perfectly satisfied already by Christ. For the pacifying of God's wrath, by the restitution of his honour, with sorrow, abhorrence, and detestation of former Sins, is the real manner of satisfying his Divine justice; consisting of a hearty sorrow for past Sins, by actions of submission and penal contrition, according to our means and feeble ability.

I beg leave to inform you, Rev. Sir, that there are two kinds of Satisfaction, the one absolute and perfect, the other weak and imperfect; not equally balanced with the grievousness of the offence, but grounded on the favourable acceptance of him that is offended. According to the first, "Christ has not only procured some little mitigation," as Mr. Field maliciously charges the Catholic Church with teaching (See his Third Book of the Church, c. 16, fol. 96), but Christ has offered, I say, and so does the Catholic Church say, a full and more than an equivalent Ransom sufficient to release all Mankind, both from the whole guilt and Punishment of Sin. According to the second, by the value of our works made acceptable by Christ, we truly satisfy for the outrage committed against God; not because he exacts a double payment for the same, this being subordinate, and derived from our Redeemer's Ransom; nor that any thing is wanting to be added to the sufficient price paid for us by his innocent blood; but that God from the first so decreed it for our greater benefit, his greater glory, for the dignity of his servants, and conformity of the members with Christ their head. (See St. Thomas Aquinas.)

Having said so much in regard to Mr. Field, I purpose now making a few remarks on the opinions of Mr. Fulke and of Calvin on this point. They bring several quotations from the Fathers, and many from Holy Writ against the Universal Church on the subject of Satisfaction. 1st. They bring against us such texts of Scripture as declare our Saviour to have offered for us a perfect redemption. (See Fulke, in c. 22 ad Cor. sect. 2 and 4; Calvin, lib. 3, Inst. c. 4, 26, 27, &c.) "And he is the propitiation for our Sins." (1 St. John ii. 2.) "Behold the Lamb of God, behold he who taketh away the Sin of the World." (St. John i. 29.) "Who being the brightness of his glory and the figure of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, making purgation of Sin; sitteth at the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Hæb. i. 3.) "But he was wounded for our Iniquities, he was bruised for our Sins." (Isaiah liii. 5.) "By whose stripes you were healed." (1 St. Peter ii. 24.) I answer as follows: there is no doubt but Christ has offered a full, copious, and most perfect satisfaction for our Sins, but it must be often applied to us by our own satisfactory works, unless it be otherwise applied by Indulgences, and Treasure of the Church. (In the course of these letters I shall enter fully into the nature of Indulgences.) Calvin (Lib. 3, Inst. c. 4, 25 et seq.) opposes to this, the Frank and Free Remission of Sins by Christ without any hope of Recompense, without pains or trouble on our part. I reply, that Christ's remission is free, because he freely enlightens us with Faith and Repentance, freely receives us into his favour and reconciles us to God, freely pardons the whole guilt of Sin, freely offered a sufficient satisfaction for all the punishments due to Sin, and freely also inspires us with Grace, by which our mean and (of themselves without it) unprofitable satisfactions are made acceptable to God—which in no manner impair, but greatly enhance the dignity and freedom of his merciful Redemption. (See St. Matt. x. and xvi.; St. Mark xvi.; Hæb. v.) For as the Son of God freely died for all men, and offered himself up as a Ransom for the Salvation of all, which, in fact, only profits those who believe in him, who obey him, who take up their cross and follow him; so he freely and sufficiently has satisfied for all, but effectually for such as by Penal afflictions, by Mercy and Truth redeem their Iniquity after Regeneration wilfully incurred. (See Fulke against Pur. p. 45, 49, &c.; Calvin, ubi Supra.)

2nd. They bring forward these texts of Scripture which speak of an absolute and a thorough repentance of Sin. As by Ezechiel (xviii. 21, 22): "If the wicked do penance I will not remember his Iniquities." By Isaiah (xxxviii. 18, 19, xlv. 22): "I have blotted out thy iniquities as a cloud, and thy Sins as a mist; return to me, for I have redeemed thee." Micheas (vii. 19): "He will turn again, and have mercy on us; he will put away our iniquities; and he will cast all our Sins into the bottom of the sea." (See Psal. xxxi. 1, 2.) I answer, that these texts speak, 1st, of a most perfect contrition, which frees us both from the Sin and the punishment due to it. 2nd, Of imperfect penance, which Ezechiel (xviii. 21) seemed to insinuate, saying:

‘But if the wicked do penance for all his Sins.’ 3rd, They are understood of the total abolishment of the Sin, and a full pardon from eternal punishment, in respect of which, God is truly said, “To blot our Sins out of his mind; to disperse them like a cloud; to cast them into the sea;” to hide them, to cover them, and not to impute them; as St. Augustine (in Psal. xxxi.) elegantly interprets the words of King David: “If God cover our Sins, he will not see them; if he will not see them, he will not punish them”; that is, with everlasting punishment, nor with temporal, if we redeem them with condign satisfaction. Therefore he who pronounced by the mouth of Ezechiel (xviii. 22): “I will not remember all his iniquities, that he hath done; in his justice which he hath wrought, he shall live.” Threatened revenge in his own person to some he had forgiven, saying: “Scietis ultionem meam.” “And Forty years you shall receive your iniquities, and shall know my revenge.” (Num. xiv. 34.) He who promised by the Prophet Isaiah (xxxviii. 17): “Thou hast cast all my Sins behind thy back,” commanded us by the mouth of Solomon (Eccles. v. 5): “Be not without fear about Sin forgiven, and add not Sin upon Sin.” He who by himself purged our Sins (Hœb. i. 3). He who said (1 St. John ii. 2): “That he is the propitiation for Sin;” announced also (Proverbs xvi. 6): “By Mercy and Truth Iniquity is redeemed.” So that both co-operate to satisfy for our Sins, the Passion of Christ, and our Works of Penance; His Passion freely, plentifully, independent of our merit or satisfaction which cancels the Sin and Eternity of Punishment; our Works sanctified in his blood, partly concur by his ordinance to expiate the remains of Temporal Punishment. Luther, the Father of the Pretended Reformation (T. 3, fol. 171-2), tells us: “Let this be your Rule, where the Scripture commands the doing of a good work; understand it in this sense, that it forbids you to do a good work, because you cannot do it.” Now I wish you to inform me, whether this Doctrine of Luther’s be a greater encouragement to virtue, or to vice. In fine, Luther, Calvin, and Protestants in general, endeavour by all means in their power to evade the force of those texts of Scripture which so powerfully show the truth of the Catholic belief on this point. (See Fulke, in c. 2, 2 Cor. sect. 2, and in c. 3 Matth. sect. 4, &c.; also see Calvin, l. 3, Inst. ca. 4.) They reply to us, that the Penalties inflicted by the ancient canons, by the Apostles, or by the hands of God were: “1st. For the Public Discipline of the Church. 2nd. For the exercise of virtue. 3rd. As the fruits of true repentance. 4th. As cautions to beware of future Sins; yet in no manner to satisfy the justice of God for former faults.”

But the Scripture flatly declares the affliction I mentioned to have been imposed for Past offences. I repeat, the Prophet Nathan said to King David: “Because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to Blaspheme, for this thing, the Child that is born of thee, shall surely die.” (2 Kings xii. 14.) And God himself said: “And I in the day of revenge will visit this Sin also of theirs. (Exod. xxxii. 34.) Therefore he meant to punish their offence, which notwithstanding was pardoned, if we believe St. Jerome. (Hier. Epist. 12, ad Gaud.) Likewise many innocent children, after the spot of original Sin is washed away by Baptism, are they not daily inflicted with the pangs of sickness, with the agony of death, not for the exercise of virtue, or future amendment, of which they are incapable, but for the revenge and punishment of the Sin of our first Father, Adam. Neither can it be said that the death of King David’s child was principally sent upon him as a fruitless caution or a token of sorrow: because he with tears, with fasting, with lying on the ground, endeavoured to prevent it as much as he could, which so virtuous a Prince would never have done, if it had been a profitable caution or fruit of repentance; much less could it have been any Penitential correction, for the Public satisfaction and discipline of the Church, because he was so unwilling that it should happen, using so many other ways to pacify God’s anger; neither is it probable that the Church would have inflicted such a Punishment upon him; likewise the tears he so copiously shed: “For I did eat ashes like bread; and mingled my drink



with weeping." (Psal. cii. 10.) "I have laboured in my groanings; every night I will wash my bed; I will water my couch with my tears." (Psal. vi. 7.) The wearing of sack-cloth, and many other great acts of humility which King Achab performed, the afflictions and voluntary fastings which the Ninivites, their King, &c. endured, were neither used as examples to others, or for the amendment of their lives hereafter, but only to appease the anger of God, and to do penance for the Sins which they had been guilty of, and which were already pardoned by the secret contrition and sorrow of their hearts, according to the interpretation of St. Jerome (Hier. in his Comm. upon the 3rd of Jonas; Jonæ iii. 9 and 10, vid Fran. Ribberum in cap. 3 Jonæ, and in cap. 1) upon this place, the very words of the Ninivites, and God's answer to them, leave not a doubt on the subject. The Intention of the Ninivites was to satisfy God, saying, "Who knoweth whether God will turn and pardon, and return from the Fury of his Indignation." The Prophet replies in his person: "And God saw their Works (not the repentance only of their inward hearts, but the Penance and satisfaction of their outward works), and He repented him of the evil he spoke against them." However they afterwards falling back into their former wickedness, the subversion of their city ensued, which the Prophet foretold.

It is as clear as day from sacred Scripture, that God required Satisfaction for Sin. The Church likewise, from the two first centuries, was so convinced of this Truth, that she imposed on Sinners the most rigorous Public Penance, according to the nature of the sins committed, which struck the Pagans with astonishment. Soon the Deserts were peopled with Illustrious Penitents, who, penetrated with the absolute necessity of satisfying the Justice of God, irritated against them on account of their past Sins, inflicted on themselves the most inconceivable torments. Calvin acknowledged that the Church believed that the satisfaction which she required was made to God, and he endeavours to show that she was mistaken. But on what does he ground his opinion, hear and be astonished, viz., "That this Satisfaction was made to the Church itself." Is it grounded upon, I ask, the example and the texts cited from Scripture, which he does not even attempt to answer, which express most clearly a Satisfaction made to God, and not to men; but such is the madness, the pride, and the sinfulness of Calvin, Luther, &c., &c., &c., who presumed, and their Followers presume to this day, to set up their own mad, weak, and silly opinions in opposition to God's Church, "the Ground and Pillar of Truth." This Catholic Doctrine of Satisfaction is grounded upon the attributes of God, the conformity which the Christian ought to have to Jesus Christ, and the general economy of Salvation. 1st. The justice of God requires a temporal satisfaction for the Sins which he has graciously pardoned. Every mortal Sin being an offence against God, the grievousness of an offence is measured according to the station of the Person who is offended against; mortal Sin therefore is of an infinite magnitude, and richly merits eternal Punishment. (See Conc. Trid. Sess. 14, cap. 8.) God wishes to forgive the Sinner; but does not his justice require of him that he should impose in exchange a temporal punishment according to the nature of the sin committed. 2nd. The Wisdom of God requires it. There are Two Sacraments for Sin, viz., Baptism, which remits Involuntary Original Sin, that is, Sins committed before we know God; and Penance, which remits the Sins which we commit after Baptism, always providing, that we have the necessary dispositions, viz., a hearty sorrow for Past Sins, and a firm resolution of never again committing Sin. Also it belongs to the Wisdom of God, that in the first of these Sacraments, the application of the merits of Christ should be entire, without any Temporal Penalty. Why? The reason is, in regard to original Sin, that Man was more miserable than guilty, not having himself committed it—and he undergoes the entire Penance by the sufferings which he goes through in this life, and which are the punishment of original Sin; and as to the Sins which Persons commit before Baptism, having become new men by a True Regeneration, it pleased Almighty God to pardon them entirely by means of this

Sacrament, of all the faults of their former life of Ignorance and of Darkness. But after Baptism, the Sins of the children of God, who have profaned their sacred character, shewing so much Indignity, Ingratitude, and Perfidy, merit without a doubt a greater Punishment. 3rd. The goodness of God requires it. The Temporal Punishments which we are obliged to submit to, are preventatives which restrain weak man, and prevent him from falling again into Sin, by the remembrance of what it has already cost him for having offended God, according to the words of the Prophet: "And see that it is an evil and a bitter thing for thee, to have left the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not with thee, saith the Lord the God of Hosts." (Jer. ii. 19.) It is thus that the Sinner is immediately armed against temptation, preserved from a relapse, and animated to perseverance. 4th. In fine, God exercises in this respect a sovereign empire; he grant pardons to those to whom he deigns to grant it, and prescribes whatever conditions he pleases. We behold how just they are—his will and pleasure are the rules for everything. It suffices for us to know, that he has revealed such and such things. The conformity which a Christian is obliged to have with Jesus Christ forms here another very decisive proof, as the Sacred Scripture says (St. Luke xxiv. 26): "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory." Ungrateful perfidious wretches as we are, who after Baptism, as regards him, have violated our oaths, and have taken no part in his sorrows; and what becomes, permit me to ask, of the maxim of St. Paul, and which I have already cited: "And if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint heirs with Christ; yet so if we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him?" (Rom. viii. 17.)

Man is not a simpleton; he has received liberty from God; he has therefore the power of doing either good or evil, and consequently, if God proposes to him an immense, an eternal happiness, he requires of him in order to obtain it, the greatest efforts, and to show this inclination in every possible manner. God is Rich and Liberal; benefits cost him nothing; nevertheless he wishes that Man should ask for them, and in order to obtain them, he must pray without ceasing. Jesus Christ in his bounty wished to become his Mediator, and the Chief of all Christians; he wishes in like manner that they should join all those prayers which they offer to him, to that ample, full, and complete satisfaction which he has made on the Cross for them all. It is thus that he has satisfied for them, and nevertheless he wishes that they should expiate by particular Penances, the Sins which they have committed after Baptism, uniting his satisfaction to theirs, from which Satisfaction of Christ all the merit comes. A father pardons his son freely, entirely, for the first time; if he relapses into his former faults, he is obliged to be more severe, otherwise they would say, he is too good, he is deficient in prudence; but in God nothing is deficient; his justice and goodness go hand in hand together, as do all his other attributes. Job speaks of Penance in dust and ashes. Joel proposes fasts, tears, and sighs. Our Redeemer in his Gospel preaches Penance in Sack-cloth and Ashes; Fasting and Sack-cloth were proclaimed by Jonas. The Prophet Daniel (Dan. iv. 24) instructs Nabuchodonosor as follows: "Redeem thou thy Sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor"; and Ecclesiasticus says (Eccl. iii. 33): "Water extinguishes a flaming fire, and alms resisteth Sins." Therefore when Sin has been committed, the anger of God must be disarmed by other works besides a bare change of heart and an amendment of life; and this Doctrine of the Catholic Church does by no means, as Protestants pretend, detract from the merits of the Blood of Christ. On the contrary, in the very same manner that the Mercy of God would be offended, if we said that through it our transgressions are so completely effaced, that the blood of Jesus Christ, which that Divine Mercy had ordained as the means by which we might obtain its fruit, has in no way participated in that purification; so we shall equally offend the Blood of Jesus Christ by saying that it has so completely atoned for our Sins that they cannot be also expiated by means of Faith and the use of the Sacraments, which the Son of God has sealed

with his Blood, as instruments of Purification when received with suitable dispositions. Those persons, I assert, offend the Redeemer, who, under the pretext of doing him honour, change the Institutions which he ordained for their Salvation. He who has Faith in the Scriptures, and in the testimony of the Holy Fathers, ought likewise to hold with Saint Augustine, that besides the Blood of Jesus Christ, there is yet another remedy which purifies (although only through the virtue of the efficacy of that Blood), since the Scriptures in many places declare that we are purged, justified, purified cleansed by Faith, by Good Works, and by the Sacraments (Eph. v. 26, Proverbs xvi. 6, James ii. 24, Acts iii. 19, 1 Peter i. 17, Rom. iii. 24); and the Fathers teach in a hundred places that by baptism, penance, tears, good works, and martyrdom, our Sins are purged, washed away, purified, removed, redeemed, effaced, abolished, consummated, expiated. St. Cyprian says (Serm. de Opere et Eleemosyn. et L. 1, Ep. 3): "Sins and stains contracted after Baptism may by alms deeds be washed away." And again: "Our offences by Satisfaction may be redeemed." St. Jerome (Hier. Ep. ad Eustochium de obitu Paulæ) says: "Long laughter ought to be recompensed with continual weeping." St. Ambrose (L. ad Virg. Laps. cap. 8): "A great crime needeth great satisfaction."\* And therefore Origen (Hom. 15 in Levit.) calls our good works, "The price of Ransom, by which our Sins are redeemed." St. Ambrose in another place says: "Habemus plura subsidia quibus peccata nostra redimamus." "We have many aids by which we may expiate our transgressions, and many remedies by which we are cleansed and purged from our Sins." (Lib. de Elia et Jejunio. c. 20.) Tertullian also says: "You are not ignorant, that, against the fire (hell) after the Baptismal institution, the aid of Confession has been appointed; 'esse adhuc in exomologesi secunda subsidia;' why are you an enemy to your own salvation? knowing that for his recovery it were instituted by the Lord, 'institutam a Domino exomologesi sciens,' shall the Sinner neglect that whereby the

\* *Catholic version*.—"Do Penance, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Matt. iii. 2.)

*Protestant version*.—"Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."

*Catholic version*.—"Unless you do Penance, you shall all likewise perish." (Luke xiii. 3.)

*Protestant version*.—"But except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

*Catholic version*.—"Fruits worthy of Penance." (Matt. iii. 8.)

St. Jerome (on Comment. 2 Joel.) says, that these "Worthy fruits of Penance, are fastings, prayers, alms," &c.

*Protestant version*.—"Fruits meet for repentance."

*Catholic version*.—"Lest again when I come, God humble me among you, and I mourn many of them that sinned before, and have not done Penance (St. Augustine, Ep. 108, says, that by this passage is understood doing great Penance for heinous Sins, as Penitents did in the Primitive Church) for the uncleanness, and fornication, and incontinences that they have committed." (2 Cor. xii. 21.)

*Protestant version*.—"And lest when I come again my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they have committed."

It is very painful to remark, that Protestants mainly owe their long and unhappy separation from the Catholic Church to their inaccurate versions of the Holy Scriptures. The passages above cited are but a trifling specimen out of a countless number of gross misrepresentations, with which their best versions abound. Grotius, the most learned of all Protestant theologians, says: "The safest version of all the Bible to them who are unlearned in the Hebrew and Greek, is the Latin vulgate version, which has no false Doctrine in it, as the consent of so many ages and nations has judged." (Treatise on the Truth of the Christian Religion; Translation of Scripture.)

King of Babylon reascended his Throne?" (De Pœnit. l. 12.) See St. Cyprian, de Baptis. et Ep. 26 et 55; Tertullian, de Pœnit. c. 3; Origen, in Len. c. 15; St. August. in Euchid. et lib. 1, de Simbol. c. 6; St. Jerome, Obit. Fabiola; St. Ambrose, Ep. 82. Tertullian, after having stated that it does not become Sinners to supplicate for pardon in the midst of luxuries and effeminate indulgences, teaches, among other Penitential works, "To Fast, "to Pray, to weep day and night before the Lord, to fall down before the "Priest, to kneel at the altars, to invoke the intercession of the brethren;" and shortly after adds: "Should any one enquire why you are thus engaged, "say, 'I have sinned against God, and am in danger of perishing everlastingly; wherefore, that I may obtain forgiveness, I thus punish myself.'" (De Pœnit. c. xi.)

I shall here beg to remark, that Protestants are continually bringing forward the examples of Peter, Mary Magdalen, the Publican, the Thief on the Cross, and the Adulterous Woman, whose Sins were forgiven without Satisfaction; to which they add the authorities of St. Ambrose and John Chrysostome confirming the same. To which I answer: 1st. To the instances only of God's word, Individual examples are no precedents for general rules. 2nd. What the Master sometimes does by his Prerogative, the Servant is not allowed to usurp as the Privilege of his Law. 3rd. I say, the tears of Peter, the contrition of Magdalen, the humility of the Publican, the admirable confession of the Thief, the shame and confusion which the Adulterous Woman endured, with the inward sorrow of her heart, might be a sufficient satisfaction for their enormous crimes, although the Scripture does not in plain terms express it. As St. Ambrose affirmed of St. Peter (Amb. l. 10, in cap. 22, Lucæ.): "Lachrimæ veniam non postulant sed merentur." "His Tears I read, his Satisfaction I read not." A most learned Catholic Divine says on this passage: "The reason may be because his tears were both a Confession "and a singular Satisfaction, 'which crave not,' according to him, 'but de- "serve and merit pardon.' Or St. Ambrose takes Satisfaction in that place "for the excuse and defence of his fault, which St. Peter used not, but would "rather (as he affirmeth) 'Condemn his Sin, that he might be justified by "confessing, than aggravate by denying.' St. Chrysostome accordingly "uses that word in his Homilies upon Genesis (Amb. ibid. Chrys. Hom. 10 "in Gen. et Hom. de Beato Philogonio), where he likewise grants that no "Satisfaction is necessary for the recovery of God's friendship, although he "after requires it for the recompense of the wrong committed against him, "in the course of his justice."\*

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\* Theodoret, commenting on that passage of St. Paul's, 2 Cor. ii. 10, says, that the Apostle pardoned the Corinthian at the Intercession of Timothy and Titus. We read also in the Eighteenth Epistle of St. Cyprian, that Indulgences, or remissions of Penitential works, were granted in the Primitive Church by the mediation of Holy Confessors or Martyrs, "The abundance of whose merits might be a supply for the want of their brethren," (2 Cor. viii. 14,) who wrote to the Bishops in behalf of some of their Christian brethren who had fallen from their Faith and then repented, otherwise they must have submitted to the temporal punishment prescribed by the Canons, before they could be received again into the Communion of the Faithful. Moreover the Martyrdom of his Saints is so acceptable to God, that it is, as it were, a sacrifice in his sight, and produces therefore many effects, both to those who suffer and to others who partake of the merits of the Sacrifice. See Colossians i. 24. Sometimes St. Paul wishes to be anathema, which Origen interprets a "Sacrifice" for the Israelites. Rom. ix. 3. In another place he offers his afflictions for the Salvation of the Corinthians, 2 Cor. i. 5, 6, 7, and in Philip. ii. 16, 17, 2 Tim. iv. 6, he speaks of his death as a libation or offering, as the Fathers do of all the sufferings of the Martyrs, calling them Christ's own sufferings, not only because they are endured for him, but also because there is so close a conjunction and communion between him who is

An eminent Protestant Divine likewise brings forward two difficult sentences from St. John Chrysostom against Satisfaction: the one out of his Homilies upon the Epistle to the Romans, "*Ubi venia, ibi nulla est poena*," "Where there is forgiveness, there is no punishment;" in which place St. Chrysostom speaks of the forgiveness given to a Jew in Baptism, who passing from the Wrath of the Law to the Grace of Christ, had full remission of all both of the Sin and of the punishment; the other is taken out of the book he wrote on Sorrow and Compunction: "God requires not that we wear hair shirts, nor to be shut up in small cells, neither does he command us to sit in obscure and dark caves, this only he demands, that we always remember and recount our Sins" (St. Chrys. de Compunct. Cordis. l. 1); where St. Chrysostom only reproves the negligence of certain Sinners who neglect to bewail and to lament their Sins, "*quasi quidam intolerabilis labor sit*," "as though it were an intolerable thing"; and thereupon he remarks, that God does not command as necessary any such rigorous or severe satisfaction as they imagined; he does not require of us to put on the clothing of monks, nor to confine ourselves to the inclosures of Anchorits, nor to be shut up in caves and in dungeons; which most severe penances, although many voluntarily and most laudably undergo them, yet God does not exact them as necessary, but only requires true contrition and some moderate satisfaction or chastisement for our sins, as this golden mouth and Illustrious Saint in many other places teaches (Chrysost. Hom. 2 de lapsis primi hom. in orat de beato Philologo et hom. 10, in Matt.), with whom St. Augustine precisely agrees, and I have only to give his very words to prove what I have asserted: "If he be just, whom thou invokest, he avengeth Sins. If he be just, thou canst not deprive the Lord thy God of his justice. Implore his Mercy, but consider his Justice; his Mercy inclineth to pardon the Sinner, his Justice to punish the Sin. What then? When thou seekest Mercy, shall Sin remain unpunished? Let David answer; let the lapsed Sinner answer; let them answer with David, that they may deserve mercy; not so (O Lord) my Sin shall not be unpunished, &c. Therefore I will not that thou should punish me, because I punish my Sin."—(S. August. in Psal. 50.) And a little after he says: "Thou pardonest him that confesseth; thou pardonest him, but punishing himself; so Mercy and Truth accord: Mercy, because man is delivered; Truth, because Sin is punished." (S. August. ibidem.) I repeat that in the first Council of Nice, Canons were enacted which speak of the Confession of Sins, and state the time during which, in certain cases, they who have given signs of true repentance, must undergo a course of penitential works. And St. Gregory of Nyssa, in his Canonical Epistle to Letoios, states the Rules of Penance, specifying the various kinds of Sins, and the duration of their appropriate punishment. In this manner the ancient Fathers of the Church assimilated their discipline to that which Almighty God prescribed to Moses in the 25th chapter of Deuteronomy: "The number of stripes shall be according to the greatness of the offence." And so likewise we read in Revelations xviii. 7: "As much as she hath glorified herself and hath indulged herself, so much torment and sorrow give ye to her." And as Jesus Christ immediately pardoned St. Peter because he wept bitterly, so St. Cyprian, in his Treatise "*De Lapsis*," never ceases to repeat, that "By fasting, by tears, and by moaning, we may appease the indignation of the Lord, as he himself admonishes. But by the contrary conduct," he adds, "more mortal wounds, greater crimes are incurred; you have sinned, and make no satisfaction: '*Peccasse non satisfacere*.'" In this manner Lactantius, the Christian Cicero of the fourth century, in his celebrated work, entitled "*The Divine Institutions*," book vii., says, That the Catholic Church alone retains the True worship, and the source of Truth;

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the head and every one of the living members of his body, which is the Church, that whatever is endured by them is considered as a part of his own sufferings.

the dwelling of Faith; "Sola Catholica Ecclesia est, quæ verum cultum retinet. Hic est fons veritatis, hoc est domicilium fidei." And continuing to speak about the characteristic marks of the true Church, he uses these remarkable words: "Now as all heretical Sects deem themselves particularly Christians, and think theirs is the Catholic Church, it should be known, that the true Church is that which prescribes Confession and Penance, by which are cancelled the Sins to which weak men are subject." All these Fathers would not certainly have taken such extraordinary pains to impress upon the minds of Christians the absolute necessity of doing Penance, had it not been the true doctrine of the primitive Church.\* They knew that penitential works far from being useless and superfluous, as Protestants pretend, are called in Scripture "fruits worthy of Penance." This way of making Satisfaction for our offences was also recommended by the Angel to Tobias: "Prayers joined with fasting and alms-deeds are better than to lay up gold. For alms delivereth from death, and shall purge away all Sin." (Tobias xii. 8, 9.) We may then conclude with St. Cyprian (*De Lapsis*), that to deny the necessity of Penance is but to shut the door to Satisfaction, because our sorrow must be proportioned to our crimes. In the following extract of the Council of Trent, is laid down all the Doctrine of the Catholic Church in regard to Satisfaction.

Council of Trent, Session XIV., Chap. viii.: "The Holy Synod declares, that it is false and wholly foreign from the word of God, that, when the guilt of Sin is remitted by God, the whole punishment due to it is also remitted. It is an error manifestly refuted—to say nothing of Tradition by sundry illustrious examples in the Holy Scriptures. And truly the nature of the Divine justice seems to demand that they who, through ignorance, have sinned before Baptism, should be taken into favour in a manner different from those who, having been once freed from the servitude of Sin and the Devil, and having received the Holy Ghost, have not feared, knowingly, to violate the temple of God and grieve the Divine Spirit. Besides it is becoming the mercy of God not to pardon our Sins without some satisfactory punishment, lest, taking occasion thence to think lightly of sinning, we fall into more grievous crimes. Doubtless, these satisfactory chastisements greatly withdraw from Sin, checking the sinner, cause him to be more vigilant and cautious; they likewise serve to cure the evil effects of Sin, and to extirpate, by the exercise of the contrary virtues, the bad habits that have been contracted. To this must be added, that while we thus, by making satisfaction, suffer for our Sins, we are made to conform to him who satisfied for us, and from whom all our sufficiency is derived; we thence have a most sure pledge, that if we suffer with him, we shall be glorified with him. (Rom. viii. 17.) But the Satisfaction which we make for our Sins, is not so ours, as if it were not through Jesus Christ; for we, who can do nothing of ourselves, as of ourselves (2 Cor. iii. 5), can do all things with him who strengthens us. Man then has nothing wherein to glory, but all our glory is in Christ, in whom we live, in whom we merit, in whom we make satisfaction, bringing forth fruit worthy of penance. (St.

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\* When Luther in his "*Defensio Verborum Cœnæ*," adduces the testimony of the Fathers in behalf of the Real Presence in the Eucharist, he exclaims thus: "Had not this been their conviction, can it be imagined that, among so many, the negative opinion should not have been uttered on a single occasion." And the learned Protestant Dr. Cave, in his "*Historia Literaria*," in which he gives an exact account of all the writers upon Christianity, either for or against it, from Christ to the Fourteenth century; speaking of the ancient Fathers of the Church, he says: "We revere the Fathers, not indeed as judges of the Faith, but as witnesses, who deliver to us with fidelity what was in every age done and believed. The more ancient these witnesses, the stronger is their testimony, and our reliance on them the more firm." (Ep. Apolog. in Appen. t. 2.)

" Luke iii. 8.) These fruits have their efficacy from him; by him they are offered to the Father, and through him are accepted by the Father. It is, therefore, the duty of the Ministers of the Church, as far as prudence shall suggest, weighing the character of Sins and the dispositions of the sinner, to enjoin salutary and proper penitential Satisfaction; lest, by conniving at Sins, and, by a criminal indulgence, imposing the performance of the slightest penances for great crimes, they be made partakers of other's Sins. Let them ever consider, that what they enjoin, must tend not only to the maintenance of better conduct and the cure of past infirmity, but also to the punishment of the Sins that have been confessed."

In conclusion, I beg here to ask, why do Protestants, when they wish to avert any approaching danger, why do they, I say, Fast, Pray, Preach, and give Alms (when yet by their contrition they think their Sins forgiven), if they did not hope by these means to prevent or remove their temporal evils, which in their prayers they confess to be inflicted for their Sins? Thus does the force of reason drive them to the practice of that which, out of opposition to the Church in communion with the See of Rome, in their doctrine they contradict. And though Christ's satisfaction was sufficient for all the punishment due to our Sins, yet if he hath appointed that we shall also satisfy, as knowing it in his wisdom to be a thing most just, who shall presume to oppose it? His prayers, also his obedience, were sufficient to obtain Heaven for us, shall we therefore neither pray nor obey? Protestants will say we shall, because we are commanded; so also are we commanded to satisfy; as, I repeat, the Prophet Daniel says: "Redeem thou thy Sins with alms, and thy iniquities with works of mercy to the poor." (Daniel iv. 24.) To avoid which text, Protestants have corrupted it; to redeem Sins is the same in effect as to satisfy for them, for how is any thing redeemed, but by satisfying the price of its redemption? Why then should Protestants (under the pretence of magnifying the operation of Christ's Satisfaction, without our concurrence, which Catholics yet acknowledge to proceed entirely from him) disobey him, and leave him consequently the less satisfied with us? But this was Luther's most acceptable way to flesh and blood, to cast all the burden on Christ, and leave nothing to themselves but the pleasing liberty of Sin, which though it should infinitely extend itself, requires no other cure for them but only their barren faith. Luther says, "That a good work done ever so well is a venial Sin according to the mercy of God, but a mortal one according to his justice." (Art. 32, t. 2, fol. 110.) And Calvin says, "That all Sins are mortal, and none of themselves venial, and that the best of our works deserve damnation." (See Alex. Ross in the place above quoted.) But this Rev. Gentleman will probably here exclaim, what are these errors of the First Reformers to our English Church Protestants, who hold none of these Tenets? To which I answer, that those men, Luther, Calvin, &c., were the first Fathers and Founders of the pretended Reformation; and that our English Protestants have but built upon the foundation which they laid; and therefore that we have every reason to object to them the Doctrine of their Patriarchs, the First Reformers, to shew that the very foundations of this edifice of their Reformed Church were destitute of this mark of holiness of Doctrine, which can never be wanting to the True Church of Christ.

## ON INDULGENCES.

### NOTE II.

I HAVE received the letter of the Rev. W. C. Fillers on Indulgences, and reply to it as follows: That the power of Indulgences is founded on the power of the Keys which Christ was pleased to entrust to the Pastors and Governors of the Church; by which emblem of Keys, is denoted the power of opening and shutting the Kingdom of Heaven—of letting in, and keeping out, as Christians shall be found worthy, of the one or of the other. This power is

promised to St. Peter in a special manner, and in his Person to all his Lawful Successors, in these words: "Thou art Peter (that is, a Rock), and upon this Rock I will build my Church; and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven." (Matt. xvi. 18, 19.) Again the Promise of Binding and of Loosing is made in another place to all the Apostles, in the same words: "Amen, I say to you whatsoever you bind upon Earth, shall be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed also in Heaven." (Matt. xviii. 18.) And Christ a little before his Ascension actually conferred this power upon them, and told them wherein it consists: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose Sins (See here the commission stamped by the broad Seal of Heaven, by virtue of which the Pastors of Christ's Church absolve repenting Sinners upon their Confession) you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose Sins you shall retain, they are retained." (St. John xx. 22, 23.) So that the power of the Keys consist in the remitting of Sins, and of retaining them; that is, in loosing men from those bands of iniquity wherewith they tie themselves, and in binding them up, or keeping them bound, till they have satisfied for their Sins according to the rules prescribed for that purpose. In a word, in opening the Gates of the Kingdom of Heaven, and letting some in, and in shutting the same, and in excluding others, as they shall be found to deserve it, our blessed Saviour never intended that the Apostles and their Successors should bind Sinners so as finally to exclude them from the Kingdom of Heaven, but only to keep them under discipline for a time, till they had fulfilled the terms of the covenant upon which he offers them salvation; which consists in obedience to his laws, in repentance and satisfaction for their Sins, and amendment of life for the time to come; so the Church in all Ages never retained the Sins of men for any other end, than to keep them in a wholesome and saving discipline, till by penitential and laborious works they had given marks of their sorrow and repentance in proportion to the greatness of their Sins. And as the Apostles and their Successors are commissioned by Christ to retain Sins, so likewise are they to loose them; and therefore may remit, abate, or alter these penitential and laborious works, as their prudence and wisdom shall judge it most expedient.

Now an Indulgence is nothing else but a relaxation or remission of some part of (or all) these penitential works to which a Sinner is liable by the canons of the Church; which remission is granted by the Pastors, but especially by the Chief Pastor of the Church, upon some weighty considerations, for the greater benefit and advantage of the Faithful in general; which, that we may better understand, it will be requisite to lay open some part of the discipline of the primitive Church with respect to this matter. We have fifty Canons that pass under the name of the Apostles; which, if not of them, are undoubtedly of some Apostolical Bishops of the First or Second Century; their use and authority being very great since that time. We have likewise the Canons of several Provincial Councils of the Third and Fourth Ages, which have been in great esteem and veneration among the Ancients; and for the pure and wholesome discipline contained in them, have been inserted into the Codex Canonum, or Book of Canons of the Universal Church, as the ancient writers term it. These Canons, among other matters of discipline, prescribed the different Penances which were to be imposed upon Sinners in proportion to the greatness of their Sins; whence came the name of Penitential Canons, so famous in antiquity. Some Canons prescribe seven years Penance for certain Sins; others, eight years for other Sins; some prescribe ten years, some fifteen, some to the hour of death. Some Penitents, by order of these Canons, fasted three days every week, during the time of their Penance, using no other sustenance during that time but bread and water; others stood covered with sack-cloth at the Church doors, *sub dio*, in the open air on Sundays and Festivals whilst their Penance lasted; others stood within doors clothed in the same raiment, weeping and lamenting their Sins;



some lay prostrate upon the floor begging and praying their brethren to intercede for them; others were admitted to hear divine service in the weeds of Penitents, after they had gone through the forementioned stations; whence came the names of Hyemantes, Flentes, Prostrati, Audientes, and which are so often mentioned in the Canons. Now these rigorous Penances (very rigorous I feel sure they would appear in our days), or Exomologeses, as some of the Fathers call them, were sometimes abated and remitted, partly on account of the fervour of the Penitents, who, before they had gone through all their stations, gave such marks of sincere repentance, that, to encourage others to follow their examples, they were admitted to the communion and fellowship of the Faithful, though they had not completed the time prescribed by the Canons; partly, but more especially, at the intercession of the Martyrs; for when any Martyrs were to be executed, and had entreated the Bishops to indulge those Penitents whom they had recommended to them, the Bishops, who could not in reason refuse anything in their power to men who were ready to lay down their lives and shed their blood for the Christian Faith, generally granted their requests. And this the Fathers called (as it truly is) Indulgence.

It were endless to instance all the examples which might be brought from the Fathers of the Second and Third Ages on this subject. St. Cyprian is most remarkable upon this point; we have several of his Epistles wherein he tells us, that having very often granted Indulgences to Penitents at the request of Martyrs, he was forced at last (being too much importuned for persons who did not deserve that favour) to write to the Martyrs themselves, to beg of them that they would only recommend such as were worthy of that grace; at least, that they should not take it ill if he should not grant their request, for fear the discipline of the Church should be weakened by so doing. The same Father complains in his letter to the Clergy of Rome, and to others, that some of his Priests in his absence had presumed to give Indulgences, which the Bishops only could grant. In short, there is nothing more frequently mentioned both by Fathers and Ecclesiastical Writers, or more universally practised in the four First Ages, than these Indulgences. Now the Church in Communion with the See of Rome, neither means by Indulgences, nor pretends to any more than the same power which the primitive Fathers both had and practised; that is, of dispensing with, or remitting the Penances prescribed by the Canons. Nor did she ever pretend to free any man from repentance for Sins, or obedience to the law of God. On the contrary, the Church in communion with the See of Rome teaches, and has always taught, that all the Indulgences in the world are worth nothing without a hearty contrition and sincere sorrow for Sin, which is the spirit and essence of Christian devotion. But canonical Penances being merely of Ecclesiastical institution, and pertaining to discipline, it cannot be denied, but that the Church has the power to bind, or to remit them, according to the different circumstances of time, place, and persons; especially since Christ himself has given her power to remit and retain Sins, in which power this relaxation is manifestly implied. It is true the Church in communion with the See of Rome does not now impose such rigorous Penances upon Sinners as the primitive Church did; nor does she expose them publicly in the Church in penitential weeds, as was practised in the primitive times. But the reason is, because no one now would undertake these Penances; therefore she is convinced that men would sooner break off with Christ, and turn Heathens, than purchase Heaven at so dear a rate; so far have wickedness and dissolution prevailed in the world.

In the infancy of the Church, piety, devotion, mortification, and austerity were lovely things; Christians practised them very much of themselves, and thereby readily undertook them when they had the misfortune to fall into any grievous Sin. Besides they had before their eyes frequent examples of the constancy and resolution of their Pastors. They saw them expose their lives with the greatest contempt of the world, and bear the torments of racks, gridirons, wheels, and other hellish instruments (Episcopacy in those days being but one remove from Martyrdom), with as much cheerfulness and as little con-

cern as if these cruel engines had been flowers and laurels; and consequently it is not to be wondered at, that the blood of the Martyrs, then reeking hot, should warm their inclinations to sufferings and to mortifications, and stir them up to a contempt of the allurements and pleasures of a wicked world, not knowing how soon they themselves should be called upon to undergo the same fiery trial. But no sooner did the blood of the Martyrs grow cold, and the terrors of death were taken away by the peace and quiet which Constantine the Great restored to the Church, than the primitive piety and devotion began to decay, and Christians multiplied their Sins as they did their riches. No sooner were the sanguinary laws and cruel edicts of Pagan Emperors repealed, and Christians put into possession of great fortunes, and promoted to honours and dignities, than they forgot their former condition, waxed wanton against Christ, and spurned at discipline. So that, in a few ages after you might as well expect grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, as the primitive Penances from modern Christians; and therefore it was necessary to mitigate the severity of that discipline, lest the generality of (I may say all) Christians should throw off all care of their salvation, and either return to Pagan Idolatry, or follow the delusions of their own fancies. However, since the Apostles and Apostolical Bishops (whose conduct ought to be the rule and measure of all future ages) have prescribed and declared what Penance ought to be imposed upon Sinners, according to the degree of their Sins, the Church has always taught, that all Christians who have been, or are so unfortunate as to fall into grievous Sins, are still liable to these Penances, unless they are dispensed with by the Church, or commuted for some other works of piety. And, that the discipline of the Church might be preserved and upheld, as much as the wickedness of the times will permit of, all Pastors and Confessors are therefore commanded to impose such Penances upon Sinners as will bear some proportion with the greatness of their Sins, though not to that degree as the primitive Canons require; leaving the rest to be dispensed with or indulged by the chief Pastors of the Church, according to the power which Christ has given them, and as General Councils have determined.

And this, in as few words as I could well deliver it, is truly and plainly the nature of Indulgences; and the reason why they are so often given, is on account of the great decay of piety and devotion in Christians, and the tender affection of the Church for their eternal welfare; not a desire of money, or of any filthy lucre, as some of our adversaries do most unjustly suggest. On the contrary, I am confident that there is not one Divine in the Catholic Church, who does not hold that it is sinful and diabolical, even the Sin of Simon Magus, to give or receive any money for Indulgences. And several General Councils and decrees of Popes have expressly declared, that to give or to receive any sort of gift, either directly or indirectly, for Indulgences, or for any other spiritual grace, is perfect Simony; which surely is sufficient to justify Catholics from any sinister dealing in this particular. As to the abuses of Indulgences, which I do not deny to have sometimes happened, we are so far from countenancing or abetting them, that it is our earnest wish, and the earnest desire of our hearts, that all such be entirely abolished and taken away. We ask no more than that all Christians in the time of Jubilees and of Plenary Indulgences, should think of their Sins in the bitterness of their souls, should repent and be truly sorry for their Sins, should have a strong hope and confidence in God, give alms to the poor, and by their earnest and fervent prayers dispose themselves, through God's grace, to receive Indulgence, or remission of these Canonical Penances, which neither the condition of the persons, nor yet the wickedness of the times, nor the great decay of piety, will permit the Church to require that they should fully perform; and this is done, because we find the very same thing practised in the best and purest times of Christianity, even in the first, second, third, and fourth centuries; especially, being warranted by the word of God, who gave to his Church the power of remitting and of retaining Sins.

My Readers should seriously reflect how dangerous it is to reject these things which the Catholic and Apostolic Church, "The Ground and Pillar

of Truth," declares to have been delivered by Christ and his Apostles. Our, and the Protestant Creed say, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church;" and they acknowledge that previous to the Reformation, they held and declared these things, wherein we differ from them, to be truths delivered by Christ and his Apostles. How then can they believe the Catholic Church, when she declares these things, if they do not hold and believe the things themselves? or how can they reasonably reject, if they believe the Catholic Church, which tells them that they are Divine truths. But there is yet something more desperate in their case to be regretted, which I implore Almighty God to give them the grace to consider. Our Saviour, says: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.) And St. Mark adds (xvi. 17): "He that believeth and is baptised, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be condemned." Now if these points which are in dispute between us and Protestants, be truths given in charge to the Apostles, then our adversaries are (to my deep regret I must say it) lost for ever; for it is not enough, according to Christ's own words, to believe in the Trinity, to believe in the Incarnation, to believe in the Holy Ghost, to believe in Baptism, in the Eucharist, &c., &c., but we must believe all things whatsoever Christ commanded, and that on pain of damnation. Christ our Saviour often reproaches the Jews for their incredulity, and the Scripture in several places gives an account of the punishment of such as would not believe the Messenger sent by God to declare his will to them. But we do not find that he ever reproached any one for having too much Faith, especially when things to be believed were declared to them by the messengers of God, which surely the Bishops and Priests of the Church are; on the contrary, we read in the Scriptures, that Christ has upon several occasions highly commended and extolled mens' readiness to believe: "O Woman, great is thy Faith." (St. Matt. xv. 28.) Where is then the harm of believing Transubstantiation, or the Real Presence, which are so plainly delivered in Scripture? Where is the harm of allowing due honour and respect to be given to Saints, and of desiring them to pray for us, since it is what we do, and what we are commanded to do to one another in this life? If they hear our prayers and intercede for us, well and good, but if they do not, what do we lose by it? Where is the harm in praying for our deceased friends? surely we do but declare our pious affections for them, though our prayers had done them no good; and where is the harm in all this? How can it injure any one to believe that the Church has power to give Indulgences, that is, to remit all or a part of the temporal punishment due for Sins, since it is plainly expressed in Scripture, that Christ gave to his Apostles, and the Apostles to their Successors, the power of remitting and retaining Sins, and that whatsoever they loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven? How can this, permit me to ask, do injury to any one, or where lies the hazard in believing those things, though we had not as much assurance of their being divine truths as of other things, since they are not contrary to any article of our Faith, nor to right reason, nor to good conduct? But there is infinite hazard in not believing them; since they have been declared by the Church, which our creed and the Scripture command us to believe and to hear, on pain of being reputed as Heathens and Publicans. Now that they are divine truths, I have demonstratively proved them to be such in my several works; besides we have all the Eastern Church on our side; the entire of the Greek Church, together with the Nestorians, Eutychians, Monothelites, the Christians of St. Thomas; in a word, all the Oriental Sects of whatsoever denomination, all practise and believe in Transubstantiation, the Real Presence, the Sacrifice of the Mass, Seven Sacraments, the use of the Liturgy in a tongue which the common people do not understand, Invocation of Saints, Veneration of Relics and Images, and Prayers for the Dead. See the Critical History of the learned Father Simon, of the Religion

and Customs of the Eastern Churches; it was printed in London, and very much esteemed by the learned. Seeing then, that the Latin Church, which together with the Greek and other Eastern Churches make up the whole body of the Christian world, and that all these Churches did hold and profess the said doctrine when the pretended Reformation commenced, and do still hold and believe the same, I think I may confidently affirm, that it is Catholic and Orthodox.

I cannot, however, conclude this article on Indulgences without commenting on an expression of this Rev. Gentleman's, in which he (and English Protestants in general) accuse "the Popes, the Successors of St. Peter, of Sacrilege for granting pardons to commit murders, or to perpetuate Sins." But this abominable and vile idea of his and of them, is so wilfully settled in their imaginations, that whatsoever we say or do, no words, no writings, no Bulls of Popes, no oaths, no protestations, no means that man can use, can ever extirpate that deep rooted, wicked, and damnable idea from their minds. But it has pleased God in the secret dispositions of his hidden judgment to prove the contrary in this wonderful and unexpected manner. About the year of our Lord 1608, in the sixth year of his then Majesty's Reign, as the Sexton (or other officer appointed for that purpose) was digging a grave in the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's, London, he chanced to touch on the coffin of Sir Gerard Braybrooke, Knight, who had been buried there two hundred years before, where finding the cords whole, the flowers fresh, he also perceived "a Charter of Pardon or Indulgences," not consumed, not eaten, not defaced after so long a period, which thus began:

"Bonifacius Episcopus, servus servorum Dei. Dilecto filio nobili viro, Gerardo Braybrooke Juniori, Militi, et dilectæ in Christo filiæ nobili mulieri, Elizabethæ ejus uxori, Lincolnæ Diocæsis, Salutem et Apostolicam benedictionem. Provenit ex vestræ devotionis affectu, quo nos et Romanam Ecclesiam reveremini, &c. &c."

I omit the rest in Latin, because I give the whole verbatim in English, as follows:

"Boniface, Bishop, Servant of the Servants of God. To his beloved Son "the noble gentleman, Gerard Braybrooke the younger, Knight, and to his "beloved daughter in Christ, the noble lady his wife Elizabeth, of the "Diocess of Lincoln, salutation and Apostolical benediction. It proceedeth "from your affectionate devotion, with which you reverence us, and the "Church of Rome, that we admit your Petitions to a favourable hearing, "especially those which concern the salvation of your souls. For this "reason, we are moved to yield to your supplications, by these presents, we "grant this Indulgence to your devotion, that such a Ghostly Father, as "either of you shall choose, shall have power by Apostolical authority to "grant to you (persisting in the sincerity of Faith, in the unity of the Holy "Church of Rome, and in obedience and devotion towards us, or our Successors the Popes of Rome, canonically entering into that See) full remission, "only once, at the point of death, of all your Sins, whereof you shall be contrite and have confessed; in such a manner, nevertheless, that in these "cases where satisfaction is to be made to any other, the same Confessor "shall enjoin you to do it by yourselves if you survive, or by your heirs if "you shall then die, which you, or they ought to perform as aforesaid. And "lest (which God forbid) you should by this favour become more prone to "commit unlawful things hereafter, We declare, that if upon the strength of "this Remission or Indulgence, you shall commit any such Sins, that this "present Pardon shall be of no assistance whatever to you in regard to them. "Furthermore, it is not lawful for any man to infringe this writing, or grant "of ours, or with whatsoever effrontery to contradict it. And if any man "shall presume to attempt any such thing, let him know, that he shall incur "the indignation of Almighty God, and of his Blessed Apostles St. Peter "and St. Paul. Given at Rome at St. Peter's, under the Fisher's ring, the "fifth of June, in the second year of our Papacy."

In the name of justice let Protestants peruse this Bull, and tell me whether

their consciences will ever again allow them to upbraid the Popes with such a damnable crime as they wish to fix upon them. Let them read the conditions here required to gain an Indulgence, and let them tell me then whether they in any manner encourage or authorise us to commit Sin. For, 1st. It is necessary thereunto to persist in the sincerity of Faith. 2nd. To be sorrowful, contrite, and to confess our Sins. 3rd. To make Satisfaction, or restitution, if any be required. 4th. Not to presume hereby to attempt unlawful things. Now I ask, who can be sorrowful, much less make a good Confession, or duly satisfy for that which he purposes to commit? Who can be mad enough to fall into Sin in the hope of obtaining a Plenary Indulgence, when this very hope and presumption are a main bar not to gain the Indulgence? And strange, no doubt, strange and admirable was the Providence of God in manifesting these things in so fit a time.

As Almighty God in his wisdom revealed the body of St. Felix, Pope and Martyr, by means of some who to find a treasure dug in the Church of S.S. Cosmas and Damianus at Rome, the very day before his Feast is celebrated, when so many doubts were expressed in regard to his Martyrdom, as his name might have been otherwise in danger of being expunged out of the calendar (See Barron. in *Annal. An. Christ.* 357); so the Divine wisdom, who with admirable judgment disposes of all things, even then in the Metropolis of the British Empire, in the great Protestant Cathedral Church of St. Paul, is found this Indulgence in testimony of the innocence of Christ's Vicegerents, when they were most damnably accused, and most shamefully condemned of one of the blackest crimes that man could be guilty of. Let no one hereafter presume therefore to stand up against a witness produced from Heaven, or call them guilty, who are so evidently by the sentence of God proved to be innocent.

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## ON THE SUPREMACY OF THE POPES.

### NOTE III.

I HAVE received the Letter of Rev. G. W. C. Browne, on the Supremacy of the Popes, and in reply I beg to state, that our Blessed Saviour establishing in his Church a Ministry to maintain unity, and to hold the Faithful in one Faith, and in one Communion, has, or has not, given to this Ministry a head to preserve it in that unity, and to prevent its numerous members, spread over the whole world, from being divided and from adopting different Creeds. The Catholic Church professes it, the Protestant Churches deny it. Among Protestants there are some, I own, who acknowledge that St. Peter had received from Jesus Christ some prerogatives more than the other Apostles; but they positively deny that St. Peter was clothed with a more extended jurisdiction than the rest of his Apostolic brethren. They also deny that this prerogative had passed from St. Peter to his Successors in the See of Rome. The Catholic Church teaches quite the contrary, as follows: 1st. That Jesus Christ has established St. Peter the first of the Apostles. 2nd. That this Primacy has passed from St. Peter to the Bishops who have succeeded him in all ages, down to our time, in the See of Rome. 3rd. That this Primacy is not only of honour but of jurisdiction. 4th. That this Primacy has for its principal object to maintain the Church in the double unity of Faith and Communion.

I shall be as concise as possible in establishing these verities by the united authorities of Scripture and of the Tradition of the First Ages of the Church. All the texts which I purpose to produce, will not prove the whole of the four articles which I am about to expound, but there is not one of them, which will not positively establish the truth at least of some of them; and as Protestants contest them all, it must be of the greatest weight against them, and their agreement will form a complete demonstration of Catholic doctrine.

We read in the New Testament that Jesus Christ having interrogated his

Apostles in regard to their belief in him, St. Peter answered him with the vivacity of his zeal, "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God." Then our Saviour replies to him, saying, "Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jonas; because flesh and blood have not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in Heaven. And I say to thee, thou art Peter; and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon Earth, it shall be bound also in Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon Earth, it shall be loosed also in Heaven." (Matt. xvi. 17, 18, 19.) The very day of his Passion, Jesus Christ said: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and thou being once converted, confirm thy Brethren." After his Resurrection he repeats to Peter three times, the protestations of his love: "When therefore they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, Son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith to him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith to him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him, Feed my lambs. He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, Lovest thou me? and he said to him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. He said to him, Feed my sheep." (St. John xxi. 15, 16, 17.)

Now permit me here to ask, have these words of our blessed Lord no meaning? Are all these promises which were made to St. Peter to have no effect? I own, that it is impossible to define from these texts the exact extent of the authority which our blessed Saviour had conferred on St. Peter, more than on the other members of the Apostolic College. But pray remark, whenever he gave any particular mission to the other Apostles, he spoke to them as a body; he never showed any preference for one over the rest. St. Peter is the only one on whom he conferred particular powers. Thus in the Gospel where we read the names of the Apostle, we find St. Peter always placed the first. (Matt. x. 2.) If we pass from the Gospel to the Apostolic history, we find this primacy, this pre-eminence, given by Jesus Christ to St. Peter, constantly exercised by this Apostle; we find St. Peter every where occupying in the Apostolic College the first place. It was he who spoke first, when Mathias was chosen in place of Judas. It was he who, at the head of the Apostles, announced the Resurrection of his Master, the day of the descent of the Holy Ghost. It was he who in the name of his colleagues, rendered testimony to Jesus Christ in the Sanhedrim. It was he who in the presence of the other Apostles pronounced the condemnation of Ananias and Saphira. It was he who was the first to announce the Gospel to the Gentiles, in the person of Cornelius. It was he that St. Paul went to Jerusalem to find, that he might receive his mission from him. It was he who opened the Council of Jerusalem, and who proposed the subjects for their deliberation. Wherever the Apostles assemble, we always find St. Peter appears at their head, and takes the leading part in the discussion. Whence, therefore, permit me to ask, came this constant pre-eminence, if he had no prerogative more than the rest of the Apostles? 1st. When I see Jesus Christ always distinguishing Peter from his other colleagues; 2nd. When I see Peter always distinguished by his colleagues, always placed by them at their head, always considered as their chief, can I fail to perceive between these two circumstances an affinity, as between the cause and the effect, between the precept and the execution?

From the texts which I have quoted, I can draw but one simple conclusion, and that is, that St. Peter had among the Apostles and over them, a Supremacy of some shape or other. I do not here assert what was the nature of that Supremacy nor the extent of the prerogatives which were attached to it. But now, for argument sake, I will agree with this Rev. Gentleman, that from these passages we cannot strictly infer that St. Peter had received jurisdiction

over his Colleagues, nor what the extent of that jurisdiction was, nor that the authority which Jesus Christ invested him with had passed to his Successors in the See of Rome; although he must confess that it is plain from the discourses of our divine Saviour, that they positively point out this jurisdiction. For example, when he says to St. Peter, that he would confirm his Brethren; and again, when he charged him to feed his lambs and his sheep; that is to say, the whole of his flock. He never so expressed himself to any other Apostle. But as the enemies of the Pontifical jurisdiction will not find these proofs sufficiently strong, I shall therefore waive them, and shall only insist that St. Peter had received from Jesus Christ a Primacy. Of what sort was it? he will ask. My reply is, it was that sort of Primacy which has always been exercised by this Apostle and his Successors in the See of Rome ever since the return of our blessed Saviour into Heaven. Perhaps he will here assert, that I cannot produce any testimony from the records of Apostolical history, that St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles, ever exercised this superior jurisdiction over the other Apostles. But permit me to tell him, that he must not be surprised at this, because there was no necessity whatever for it. In these happy times everything was done by the Apostles with the most perfect agreement and kind feeling; there were no disputes among them that required the necessity of appealing to a superior jurisdiction, and if there were even a momentary difference of opinion, an amicable discussion soon terminated the affair. Such was the spirit which animated the whole of the Apostolic College, and evinced their great wish to regulate everything in accordance with their inferiors. At the election of a Successor in place of Judas, it was not the Apostles only, but the entire body of the Faithful who elected Mathias and Barnabas. (Acts i. 15, 23.) It was the entire body of the Disciples who elected the Seven Deacons. (Acts vi. 5.) In the Council of Jerusalem, the Apostles assembled with the ancients to decide the question then before them. "And the Apostles and ancients came together to consider of this matter." (Acts xv. 6.)

Thus he must perceive, that there was no occasion whatever for St. Peter to make use of the authority which Jesus Christ had invested him with. But if in the times which have immediately followed the Apostles, and during the first ages of the Church, we see the jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiffs, Successors of St. Peter, always recognized and exercised throughout the whole universal Church and over all its Bishops, I cannot therefore but conclude that this Primacy, which our blessed Saviour had invested St. Peter with, is a Primacy not only of honour, but of jurisdiction; and a jurisdiction not only superior to every other, but extended over all the Bishops of the Earth. In fine, if we see this jurisdictional Primacy thus recognised and always exercised by the Roman Pontiffs, Successors of St. Peter, had for its object the maintaining and preserving unity in the Church, I cannot but conclude, therefore, that the Pontiff, Successor of St. Peter, is established by Jesus Christ as a centre of unity to which all the Church ought to have recourse.

I shall now examine what was the Tradition of the First Ages of the Church regarding the authority of the Roman Pontiffs. And surely, we cannot more effectually know what were the institutions of Christ, than by ascending as close as possible to the very time of our blessed Saviour and of his Apostles; and also permit me here to remark, and which must have great weight with a thinking sensible Protestant, that they themselves (Protestants) acknowledge the purity of the doctrine of these first ages of the Church. But I shall now add to the strong proofs I have already produced, another of great weight, and which appears to me to demonstratively prove the Primacy of St. Peter's chair. If we find from the very first ages of the Church, the Roman Pontiffs in possession of jurisdiction, which was recognized throughout the whole Catholic Church, I assert that it had for a principle the gift which the Divine founder of the Christian Religion had bestowed on St. Peter. In fine, it either emanated from this sacred principle, or in the course of the first ages of the Church it had its commencement. But many most weighty and powerful reasons shew the absurdity of this latter

supposition. 1st. It would be necessary that all the Christian Bishops should willingly consent to resign a portion of their authority in order to give it to a superior, thereby subjecting themselves to his authority, and from the state of independence which they then enjoyed, to make themselves dependent on a person they knew nothing about. For it is not in human nature for man to place himself willingly under a yoke which he never had before borne; nor is it to be supposed that these Bishops would thus consent to become dependents if they did not believe it to have emanated from the Saviour of the world. 2nd. It was necessary that this change of power should take place unanimously by all the Bishops, spread over Asia, Africa, and Europe, separated from each other by the seas, by immense distances, and that all this should be effected when the means of communication were so badly arranged, and I will say, even rendered quite impracticable, by the persecutions which Religion was then labouring under. Moreover, that this great change, this most important event, should take place without contradiction, without noise, without reclamation, and above all, that the entire body of the Bishops throughout the world should agree to this spoliation, without any one of them dissenting from it. In fine, that this great revolution throughout Christendom should have been accomplished with such silence, that not one of the numerous Christian writers of the first ages, which have immediately followed the time of our Saviour, ever knew it, or knowing it, ever mentioned it. Also pray remark, that all those Heresies which sprang up in the Church, and which were daily increasing, were all condemned by the Popes, and consequently they were interested to reject their authority, not one of them ever hinted a single word against this pretended recent origin of the Supremacy of the See of Rome, and which they could not be ignorant of.

Such are the absurdities which the enemies of the Pontifical Jurisdiction allow themselves to be devoured with, if they wish to combat the authority of the first ages of the Church. But I, on the contrary, evidently seeing the consequences of this supposition, I conclude, if this Tradition be true, and which I am going to prove, if the first ages of the Church depose in favor of the Jurisdictional Primacy of the Roman Pontiffs, this Jurisdictional Primacy, I say, will be demonstratively shown to be of divine Law.

As Calvin was one of the greatest enemies of the Supremacy of the Roman Pontiffs, and as much of the doctrine of the Church of England is Calvinistical, therefore, for the information of my Protestant readers, I will say a few words regarding this arch-heretic as follows. Calvin being obliged to leave France to disengage himself from law affairs, went to Germany, and there sought out the greater part of those who were busy in disturbing the consciences and agitating the minds of men. At Basle he was presented by Bucer to Erasmus, who resorted to the private conferences without being induced to embrace the opinions of these innovators. Erasmus, after having conversed with him upon some of the points of Religion, exceedingly astonished at what he had discovered in his dispositions, turned towards Bucer, and showing young Calvin to him, said: "I see a great plague rising in the Church against the Church." "*Video magnam pestem oriri in Ecclesia contra Ecclesiam.*"

"Calvin, I am aware, is violent and wayward; so much the better; he is the very man to advance our cause." (Wolmar.) Thus spoke a German, who had taught him at Bourges, and who, together with Greek and Hebrew, had filled him with the new doctrines of Germany. "Calvin (said Bucer) is a true mad dog. The man is wicked, and he judges of people according as he loves or hates them." Badoin, expressing his disapprobation of the opinions of Bucer and Melancthon, said, that he admired their modesty, but that he could not endure Calvin, because he had found him too thirsty for vengeance and blood: "*Propter animam vindictæ et sanguinis sitim.*" Badoin, induced by Cassandre, had renounced the doctrine of Calvin; he was the most learned and renowned lawyer of his time, he was born in the year 1520, and died in 1573. (See his Funeral Oration on Papyrius Mason, Paris. See Bibl. Mazarine.)



The intolerant and sanguinary spirit of this too celebrated man (Calvin) in one of his letters to his friend the Marquis de Poet, says: "Do not find fault with our ridding the country of these Fanatics, who exhort the people by their discourses to bear up against us, who blacken our conduct, and wish to make our Faith be considered as an Idle Fancy. Such Monsters ought to be suffocated, as happened at the execution of Michael Servetus, the Spaniard." The original of this letter was preserved in the archives of the Marquis de Monteleuart. We are assured that Monsr. Voltaire received in 1772 an authentic copy of it; after he had read it, he wrote on the margin some lines against Calvin: "What man was ever more imperious and positive and more divinely infallible than Calvin, against whom the slightest opposition that men dared to make was always a work of Satan, and a crime deserving of Hell fire." (J. J. Rousseau, *Lettres de la Mort*.) Calvin's erroneous opinions on the Trinity excited against him the zeal of one, who in other respects held his Sacramentarian opinions: "What Demon has urged thee, O Calvin! to declaim with the Arians against the Son of God? . . . It is that Anti-Christ of the North that thou hast the imprudence to adore, that grammarian Melancthon." (Stancharus de Mediat. in *Calv. instit.* No. 4.) "Beware Christian Readers, above all ye Ministers of the Word, beware of the books of Calvin. They contain an impious doctrine, the blasphemies of Arianism, as if the spirit of Michael Servetus had escaped from the executioner, and according to the system of Plato, had transmigrated whole and entire into Calvin." (*Ibid.* No. 3.) The same Author gave us the title to his writings: "Upon the Trinity, and upon Jesus Christ our Redeemer, against Henry Sullinger, Peter Martyr, John Calvin, and the other Ministers of Zurich and Geneva, disturbers of the Church of God." By teaching that God was the author of Sin, Calvin raised against him all parties of the Reformation. The Lutherans of Germany united to refute so horrible a blasphemy: "This opinion (said they) ought every where to be held in horror and execration; it is a stoical madness, fatal to morals, monstrous and blasphemous." (*Corpus doctrinæ Christianæ*.) "This Calvinistic error is horribly injurious to God, and of all errors the most mischievous to mankind. According to the Calvinistic Theologian, God would be the most unjust tyrant—it would no longer be the Devil, but God himself who would be the Father of lies." (*Conrad Schlussem. Calvin Theol. fol. 46.*)

Dupin, though a rank enemy of the Roman See, and a Jansenist, reproved and censured by the Catholic Church, spoke of the decision of the Council of Nice, respecting the contest between the Bishops of Alexandria and of Rome, but said, "That this decision of the Council did not disprove the Primacy of Rome;" so that this doctrine is at least as old as the year A.D. 325, when Sylvester of Rome presided by his Legate, Osius of Cordova, at the Council of Nice. This shows that the authority of Rome was then recognized. He spoke of the Council of Chalcedon. I have now before me an authentic historian, recognized by the Catholics, and one who tells sharp truths of individual Catholics when he conceives them to be in the wrong. It is Barronius. In his *Annals*, year of Christ 451, the 12th of Pope Leo, 27th of Valentine, and 2nd of Marcian, he says: "That in this Council the authority of the See of Peter was recognized. Three hundred and sixty Bishops met in this Council. Circumstances not permitting Pope Leo to assist at it in person, he sent three Legates, two Bishops and a Priest, to preside in his name at the First Session. Paschasinus, bishop of Lillibeum, and one of the Legates of the Pope, preferred charges against Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria, for his uncanonical conduct in the Conventicle of Ephesus. Dioscorus thus accused and convicted, was compelled to leave his seat and sit in an inferior place in the middle of the assembly. Subsequently a sentence of deposition was pronounced against him; and as his guilt was manifest, he left the assembly and appeared no more. The Fathers of the Council unanimously exclaimed, that the doctrinal decisions of Leo were those of Peter himself: '*Petrus per Leonem locutus est.*'—Peter has

spoken by the mouth of Leo.'" (Vid. Reeve's 1st vol. 263.) "The Fathers of the Council directed to St. Leo a synodical letter, in which they acknowledged him for the interpreter of St. Peter, for their head and guide." (Vid. Barronius, *ibid.*) Now here is the authority of the first general Council of Nice, as quoted by Labbe.

#### COUNCILS.

"The Roman Church has always the Primacy." (Labbe, t. 2, p. 41.)

The Second General Council and first of Constantinople says: "Let the Bishop of Constantinople have the first share of honor after the Bishop of Rome." (Alexandria was entitled to the second rank.)

The Third General Council of Ephesus says: "St. Peter, the Prince and Head of the Apostles, the foundation of the Catholic Church, received the Keys of the Kingdom from our Lord Jesus Christ, and the power of loosing and binding Sin was given to him, which to the present time, as it ever has done, subsists and exercises judgment in his Successors."

The Fourth General Council of Chalcedon, writing to St. Leo, says: "We therefore entreat you, to honour our judgment by your decrees; and as we have adhered to our head in good things, so let your Supremacy supply what becometh (or is wanting) for thy children."

The Council of Florence, in which the Greek and Latin Bishops were present, thus speaks: "We define that the Holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff hold the Primacy over the entire Earth, and that he is the Successor of the Blessed Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, the true Vicar of Christ, and the head of the whole Church."

The General Council of Trent speaks in the following terms: "The Sovereign Pontiffs, in virtue of the supreme power delivered to them over the entire Church, had a right to reserve the judgment of certain more grievous crimes to their own tribunal."

Melancthon holds the following language, as quoted by Bossuet in his History of the Variations, l. 5, n. 24: "Our people agree that the Ecclesiastical Polity, in which are recognized superior Bishops of many Churches, and the Bishop of Rome superior to all Bishops, is permitted. Thus there is no contest respecting the Supremacy of the Pope and the authority of Bishops; and also the Pope and the Bishops could easily preserve this authority, for it is necessary for a Church to have leaders to maintain order, to keep an eye upon those called to the ecclesiastical state, and upon the doctrine of the Priests, and to exercise ecclesiastical judgment, so that if there were no Bishops we should have to make them. The monarchy of the Pope would also serve much to preserve amongst many nations the unity of Doctrine; wherefore we could easily agree as to the Supremacy of the Pope if we could agree in everything else."

Leibnitz (a most learned Protestant), as quoted by De Starck, p. 22, speaks as follows: "As God is the God of order, and as by divine appointment, the body of the only, Apostolic, Catholic Church can be maintained by a single, hierarchical, and universal government, it follows, that there must be a supreme spiritual chief, who shall be confined within proper bounds, established by the same (divine) right, and invested with all the power and dictatorial authority necessary for the preservation of the Church."

#### FATHERS.

St. Irenæus of Lyons, the Disciple of St. Polycarp, who himself appears to have been consecrated by St. John the Evangelist, repeatedly urges this argument against his contemporary Heretics. He says: "We can count up those who were appointed Bishops in the Churches by the Apostles and their Successors down to us, none of whom taught this doctrine. But as it would be tedious to enumerate the Succession of Bishops in the different Churches, we refer you to the tradition of that greatest, most ancient, and universally known Church, founded at Rome by St. Peter and St. Paul,

"and which has been preserved there through the Succession of its Bishops, down to the present time."

Tertullian, who also flourished in the same century (year 150), argues in the same manner, and challenges certain Heretics in these terms: "Let them produce the origin of their Church; let them display the Succession of their Bishops, so that the first of them may appear to have been ordained by an Apostolic man, who persevered in their communion."

St. Athanasius writes to St. Felix, the Roman Pontiff: "For this purpose Christ placed you and your predecessors to guide the ark, and to have the care of all the Churches, that you may help us."

St. Cyprian, in his 55th Epistle, holds the following language: "They dare to sail and carry letters to the Chair of Peter and the Principal Church, whence sacerdotal unity proceeds."

St. Augustine, who wrote in the Fifth century, mentions the following among the other motives of credibility in favor of the Catholic Religion: "There are many other things which keep me in the bosom of the Catholic Church. The agreement of different people and nations keep me there. The authority established by miracles, nourished by hope, increased by charity, and confirmed by antiquity, keep me. The Succession of Bishops in the See of St. Peter, the Apostle (to whom our Lord after his Resurrection committed his sheep to be fed), down to the present Bishop, keeps me there. Finally, the very name of Catholic which, among so many heresies, this Church alone possesses, keeps me there."

St. Jerome, in his 4th Epistle to Pope Damasus, says: "I, following no Leader but Christ, am in communion with your Holiness, that is, with the Chair of Peter. Whoever gathereth not with you, scattereth; that is, whoever is not of Christ is of Anti-Christ."

This is in substance the testimony of the Bishops throughout the world in every AGE to the present time.

P.S.—I stop the press to acknowledge the receipt of the Second Letter of the Rev. W. C. Browne, on the Supremacy of the Popes. He asks me, as he delights in interrogatories, "Have we never wondered that the Supremacy of Peter has been passed by in all the Epistles and in the Acts of the Apostles?" I reply that there is no cause for this supposed wonder, as its exercise is seen very distinctly marked in the Acts, and its Divine origin strongly declared in the Gospels. Great indeed is my astonishment, that many read these Divine Writings and perceive not these truths, but prefer vain conjectures and weak reasonings to the plain and solemn words of Jesus Christ. Perhaps this Rev. Gentleman has not permitted his attention to be directed to the various passages of the Gospel in which the Primacy of Peter is indirectly, but significantly intimated. "Is the Church," says St. Francis de Sales (*Controverses de S. Franc. de Sales, Disc. 42*), "likened unto a house? It is placed on the Foundation of a Rock, which is Peter. Will you represent it under the figure of a Family? You behold our Redeemer paying the tribute as its master, and after him comes Peter as his representative. Is the Church a Bark? Peter is the Pilot; and it is our Redeemer who instructs him. Is the Doctrine by which we are drawn from the Gulf of Sin represented by a Fisher's net? It is Peter who casts it; it is Peter who draws it; the other Disciples lend their aid; but it is Peter that presents the fishes to our Redeemer. Is the Church represented by an Embassy? St. Peter is at its head. Do you prefer the figure of a Kingdom? St. Peter carries its keys. In fine, will you have it shadowed under the symbol of a Flock and a Fold? St. Peter is the Shepherd and universal Pastor under Jesus Christ." This Rev. Gentleman reminds me, "That in the two Epistles of St. Peter, there is not one word of intimation on the supreme rule and government supposed to have been conferred on him." I answer, that it is enough that he writes to his colleagues in the ministry with the dignity and authority that become the Prince of the Apostles; and such

is the judgment which a most eminent Protestant critic (Grotius) has passed on his style. (See Grotius, Synops. Crit. Proleg. Ep. 1, Petri.) He speaks as one to whom Pastors and People were alike entrusted; and whilst, with the humility which his Divine master inculcated, he regards himself as a fellow-labourer, he prescribes to the dignitaries of the Church the spirit they should exercise their power. (1 Ep. Peter, c. v.)

## ON INFALLIBILITY.

### NOTE IV.

I HAVE received the letter which was left at my Publishers for me, from the Rev. W. George, the purport of which appears to me to be, to turn into ridicule that great dogma of Catholic belief, viz., the Infallibility of the Church; and to which I reply by asserting, that this Rev. Gentleman ought to have distinguished between Faith and opinion. For the Pope's Infallibility is no article of Faith, nor proposed by the Church as a condition of communion. She teaches, indeed, that the Church established upon Earth by Christ is Infallible in all her decisions relating to matters of Faith. But this is no error; on the contrary, it is a fundamental truth grounded on the most express and positive promises of Christ. 1st. "That the Gates of Hell (the power of darkness and error) shall not prevail against his Church" (Matt. xvi. 18); which undoubtedly they would, if she were corrupted in her Faith. 2nd. That the spirit of truth shall lead her Pastors into all truth (Joh. xvi. 13); and that for ever (Joh. xiv. 16, Matt. xxviii. 20). Which therefore cannot be understood of the Apostles only, because they were not to remain here for ever.

It is upon these clear promises that we believe the Church of Christ to be Infallible in her Faith. And it follows from it, that in all controversies of Religion, when the Church has once pronounced sentence, all with perfect safety may and ought to submit to her judgment. For surely he must have very little sense who is fearful of being misled when he follows the direction of an infallible guide. To render this submission still more rational, the Holy Ghost has taken care to establish the Church's authority in the plainest and strongest terms. 1st. Our Blessed Redeemer has already pronounced sentence on those who will not hear his Church: "But if he will not hear the Church," says he, "let him be to thee as a Heathen and a Publican." (Matt. xviii. 17.) Which if true in private disputes, is more evidently so in public controversies of a higher concern. In another place he thus settles the authority of spiritual guides: "He that hears you, hears me; and he that despises you, despises me." (Luke x. 16.) 2nd. St. Paul positively affirms, that the Church of Christ is the Pillar and Ground of Truth (1 Tim. iii. 15); which cannot be true if she be capable of seducing her children by false doctrines. Upon this principle in his Epistle to the Hebrews, he instructs them in the important lesson of submission to their spiritual guides: "Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves." (Heb. xiii. 17.) And speaking of the same guides whose Faith follow, says he (v. 7):

Again, writing to the Ephesians, he lets them know, that God has not only placed in his Church Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists, but also Pastors and Teachers. (Eph. iv. 11.) For what end? (v. 12.) For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the mystical Body of Christ. How long? (v. 13.) Till we all come to the unity of Faith. For what purpose? (v. 14.) That henceforth we be no more like children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of cunning men lying in wait to deceive us. This is evidently spoken in reference to the people who are here taught, 1st. That the Pastors of the Church are appointed by God himself to be their guides in Faith. 2nd. That these guides shall continue in the Church of Christ without ceasing to

the end of the world, till we all come to the unity of the Faith. 3rd. That in all controversies of Religion, it belongs to these guides to fix the wavering judgment of the people, against all the wicked arts of impostors and seducers, and that, consequently, the Faithful ought to rely on their directions with an entire confidence.

For unless they may be safely depended on, they would not fully answer the end of their institution; the people, especially the ignorant, upon every new and difficult question, would be left in uncertainty, and might even suspect their Guides to be their seducers; as the Jews, when deprived of such privileged Teachers, were led into the grossest errors by the Scribes and Pharisees. But blessed for ever be the mercy of God, who has now established his covenant upon better promises (Heb. viii. 6); who has settled upon Earth a visible Church, which is the Pillar and Ground of Truth, against which the Gates of Hell shall never prevail; and to which he has promised the spirit of truth for ever. Accordingly, I leave it to every one blessed with common sense to judge, whether they who refuse to submit their private reason to the authority of this Church, be not in danger of being self-convicted at the great tribunal of God?

Hence I infer, first, That whoever is a member of any Church that owns herself to be Fallible and subject to errors in Faith, is not a member of that Church to which Christ has promised his Spirit for ever.

I infer, secondly, That he is not a member of the true Church; because only that Church which Christ established, and to which he made that promise, is the true one. And I leave it to him to consider, whether any man can hope to attain salvation who lives wilfully out of the communion of that Church which Christ came to establish for the salvation of mankind; and of which it is said (Acts ii. 47): "The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved."

I infer, thirdly, That the Church of Christ can never be under any necessity of having her Faith reformed. For if she can never fall into any errors destructive to the Faith revealed by God, what need can there be of any such Reformation?

I infer, lastly, That if all men had but Faith enough to believe the Church established by Christ himself to be our guide, and humility enough to submit their judgments to hers, there had never been any heresy in the Christian world. Which, as it shews on the one hand the excellency of Christ's institution, so, on the other, it is a dreadful instance of the pride and misery of mankind, who had rather lose Heaven by presumption, than gain it by following better lights than their own.

If this Rev. Gentleman should say, first, That the promises of Christ are all conditional, because the condition of obedience is always implied?

I answer, that if this objection had any force, it would prove a great deal more than Protestants design. For if the promises of Christ, which were addressed immediately to his Apostles, be only conditional, it follows, that the Apostles had not an absolute promise of being always assisted by the Holy Ghost, which, in effect, would undermine all they either taught or wrote, that is, the entire New Testament.

If he tells me, that the Apostles had particular privileges, such as writing the inspired volume, receiving the Holy Ghost visibly, &c., so that this promise might be absolute to them, and only conditional to the Church in after times?

I answer, that this likewise will undermine the Gospel. For first, If the promises made to the Church be not absolute, the Gates of Hell may prevail against her. Secondly, When she first received the books of the New Testament, for example, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Revelations as written by the Apostles, and as parts of the Holy Scripture, she was either absolutely Infallible, or not. If she were, an absolute promise of Infallibility was not confined to the Apostles and Evangelists. But if she were not absolutely Infallible, she might be mistaken in her Faith concerning the authority of those writings, which is, in fact, to undermine the Scripture.

If he says, secondly, that the Scripture is plain in all things which is necessary for Christians to believe; and that consequently there is no need of an Infallible Guide?

I answer, that the Scripture is a sure rule of Faith only to those who, for the right understanding of it, use their best endeavours, and the means which are of God's appointment, that they be not carried about with every wind of doctrine," nor had she a Divine assurance that the Gates of Hell should never prevail against her. On the contrary, her fall in rejecting the Messiah was positively foretold by the Prophets: "As, that he should be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel," &c. (Isa. viii. 14.) So that if the Synagogue had ever any promise of Infallibility, it was not to be perpetual. But of the Church, Isaiah thus prophesies: "The Redeemer shall come to Sion, &c. My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, says the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." (Isa. lix. 20, 21.) "They shall fear thee as long as the Sun and Moon endure throughout all generations." (Psal. lxxii., Heb. v. 5.) Which is a plain and positive prediction that the Church's Infallibility was to be perpetual, and last to the end of the world.

But let us now hear his reasons against the Church's Infallibility. The first is, because, says he, this gives the Church a greater authority than the Apostles ever laid claim to. For which he quotes St. Paul, saying: "Not that we have dominion over your Faith," &c. (2 Cor. i. 23.)

But will he, permit me to ask, venture to assert that the Apostles were not Infallible in delivering the Christian doctrine? If he does, he destroys the very foundation of Christianity; for it will then follow, that they were not Infallible either in their preaching or writing, and consequently the Gospels written by them are not Infallibly true. How then do they contain the pure word of God, which surely is Infallible? As to the words of St. Paul telling the Corinthians, "that he had no dominion over their Faith," the Rev. W. George, I hope, will not pretend that St. Paul had no power or authority from God to oblige the Corinthians to believe the doctrine he had taught them; or that he submitted it to their private judgment to examine it, to change it, or reform it, as they pleased. And if this were not his meaning, to what purpose does he quote his words. All therefore that St. Paul disclaimed was a tyrannical or arbitrary dominion over their Faith, which some false Brethren accused him of to lessen his authority; that is, he would not have them imagine, that because he had been the chief instrument of their conversion to the Faith, he pretended to lord it over them in an arbitrary manner, or to tyrannize over their persons by chastising them with a severity unbecoming the meekness of an Apostle.

But to put the matter beyond all dispute, the same Apostle writes thus to the Galatians: "Though we or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel unto you, let him be accursed." (Galat. i. 8.) Now I ask, whether the Apostle did not here claim an Infallibility in what he had preached? Whether in these words he allowed the Galatians to believe that he had been under a mistake? Or whether it be not as plain as day that he demanded an entire submission to the doctrine he had taught them? And how far then was St. Paul from encouraging the private judgment of any man to control his decisions, since he would not allow it even to an Angel from Heaven, but pronounced those accursed that should pretend to reform the doctrine he had preached.

The second reason the Rev. W. George brings against the Church's Infallibility is, because it is contrary to Christ's command concerning the trial of doctrine. I answer, as we may examine the Scriptures though Infallible, so may we also try and examine the doctrine of the Church though Infallible; that is to say, we may not only seek to understand it according to the best of our capacity, but search diligently into the grounds or motives of our belief of it; which fully answers the following command of St. Peter, quoted by the Rev. W. George: "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you." (1 Pet. iii. 15.) For is not every Catholic ready to give a very good reason for his hope or faith by saying he follows a guide of God's own appointment? That Christ promised to preserve this guide from erring, and that therefore he may safely depend upon him? Nay, I appeal to any man of common sense, whether they who follow their own private judgment in opposition to Church authority, can give as rational account as this is of their hope.

His third reason against the Church's Infallibility is, because as to matter of fact, Guides and Teachers had caused the people to Sin by following them. And for this he quotes four texts; but he might have spared himself all this labour. For whoever doubted but there are and always have been many false Guides? But the Question is, whether the Church established by Christ to direct us in the way of Salvation be of that number? I assert not. For if she were, Christ would not oblige us under pain of eternal damnation to hear her voice.

St. Irenæus, in the Second age, says: "Where the Church is, there is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of God is, there is all grace." (L. 3, c. 40.) And again: "We must believe those Priests that are in the Church, those that have a Succession from the Apostles, who, together with Episcopal power, have according to the good pleasure of the Father received the certain gift of truth." (L. 1, c. 49.) And c. 62: "The Church shall be under no man's judgment, for to the Church all things are known, in which is perfect Faith of the Father, and of all the dispensations of Christ, and a firm knowledge of the Holy Ghost, who teacheth all truth."

Origen, in the Third age, says: "That only is to be believed for truth which in nothing disagrees from the tradition of the Church. And in our understanding Scripture, &c., we must not believe otherwise than as the Church of God hath by Succession delivered to us." (Præfat. in lib. Periarth.) In the same age, St. Cyprian declares that "The Spouse of Christ cannot be defiled with adultery; she is pure and chaste." (De Unitat. Eccl.) And a little after he says: "Whosoever divides from the Church, and cleaves to the adulteress, separated from the promises of the Church; he cannot have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his Mother." And again, speaking to St. Peter's chair, and to the principal Church: "Infidelity or false faith cannot have access." (Ep. 55.)

In the Fourth age, Lactantius Farminianus says: "It is only the Catholic Church that hath the true worship of God, this is the well-spring of Truth, the dwelling place of Faith," &c. (L. 3, c. ult.) In the same age, St. Cyril of Jerusalem declares that "The Roman Faith commanded by the Apostles cannot be changed." (L. 3, c. 4, in Apolog. Cont. Ruffin.)

In the Fifth age, Vincentius Lyrinensis says; "All those that will not be accounted Heretics, must conform themselves to œcumenical councils." (Advers. hæres. c. 41.) In the same age, the illustrious St. Augustine says: "I know by Divine Revelations that the Spirit of Truth teacheth it (the Church) all truth." (Lib. 4, de Baptism, c. 4.) And again: "To dispute against the whole Church is most insolent madness. And I myself would not believe the Gospel, were it not that the authority of the Church moves me to it." (Cont. Epist. fundam. c. 5.)

I shall now answer four or five of the principal objections which this Rev. Gentleman brings against the Infallibility of the Church. First objection, he says, "St. Peter erred in Faith when St. Paul contradicted him to his face." I answer, No; it was only in a manner of fact, or conversation,

according to Tertullian (L. Præscrip. c. 28), by withdrawing himself and refusing to eat with the Gentiles for fear of the Jews. (Gal. viii. 12.) Second objection, he says: "Every man is a liar." I answer, in his own particular case be it so; yet the Holy Ghost can and will teach the Church all truth. He is no friend to truth who will contradict it; though man of himself may err, yet by the Holy Ghost he may be so guided that he err not. Third objection, he says: "The Church may err, at least in points which are not fundamental." I answer, all that God has revealed is fundamental, at least for the formal motive of belief, viz., the divine authority revealing (though not always for the matter); and if it be once sufficiently proposed to us by the Church as so revealed, we are then bound to believe it; so that the Protestant distinction of fundamentals and non-fundamentals is nonsensical in the extreme. Besides if the Church be Infallible in fundamentals, then Protestants are Schismatics at least in revolting from her in points non-fundamental or necessary to salvation, and they Sin *violently* against charity by accusing us of Idolatry. Fourth objection, he says: "There is no Apostolical Tradition for the Infallibility of the Church?" I answer, Yes there is, and a more universal one than for the Canon of Scripture itself (which, notwithstanding this Rev. Gentleman believes on that very account, if he believes at all), for there is not any one book, either of the old or new Testament, which has not been rejected by some Heretic or other; if therefore it be a sufficient proof of an universal tradition for the whole Canon of Scripture, that some one or two General Councils only have set down the number and names of all the books of Scripture, though not without some variety, and that the Fathers have given testimony to them, some to some books, some to others, but few to all, and that the Church in after ages has accepted them for such; how much more universal is the tradition for the Infallibility of the Church, which is virtually decided and attested by the anathemas and definitions of all the General Councils that ever were, condemning all who did not humbly obey and subscribe to them; every decision being attested by all the Fathers (no one contradicting or condemning the style), and most unanimously accepted by the whole Church in after ages. Fifth objection, he says: "The Council of Trent erred by adding to the Canon of Scripture?" I reply, it did no such thing; the Third Council of Carthage approved all the same number of books by name excepting Baruch, whom they comprised with the Prophet Jeremiah, whose Secretary he was upwards of 1400 years ago.

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P.S.—I have just received a second letter from the Rev. W. George, with further objections to the Infallibility of the Church; and I answer three or four of the strongest of them in a postscript to this note.

First objection, he says: "The Council of Frankfort condemned the Second Nicene Council for giving sovereign honour to Images, as you may see in the preface of the Caroline Books." I answer, the Second Council of Nice allows of no such honour to Images, but only a salutation or honorary worship, not true Latria (or sovereign honour), which it defines to be due to God only. (Acts 1, 7, 8.) The Caroline Books are of no authority; they say that the Council was not approved of by the Pope, which is false, and that it was held at Constantinople in Bithinia, whereas Constantinople is in Thrace.

Second objection, he says: "The Lateran Council under Leo X., Sess. 11, defined a Pope to be above a Council, and the Council of Constance, Sess. 4, defined a Council to be above a Pope." I answer, that neither part was ever yet acknowledged by the Church for an œcumenical decree or definition; and if it were, it would be answered as follows, that the Lateran Council defined only a Pope to be above a Council taken without a Pope, or not approved, and that the Council of Constance only defined a Council approved by a Pope to be above a Pope without a Council; which definitions are by no means contradictory, no more than to say one part of anything is



larger than another, and the whole larger than both; so that hence it cannot be inferred that either Council erred, nor was either decree approved of by the Pope.

Third objection, he says: "The Council of Basil defined that a Council was above a Pope?" I answer, the decree was not approved of, nor any other of that Council, but only such as concerned Church benefices. (See Eugenius with Turrecremata, l. 2, c. 100.)

Fourth objection, he says: "The Council of Arminum defined Arianism." I answer, it did no such thing, and that equivocal decree which was there made, was never approved of by the Pope; and the Fathers themselves (who were deluded by the Arians, with words that bore a double meaning), when they perceived the fraud, lamented, and renounced the fact.

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## ON THE EUCHARIST.

### NOTE V.

I HAVE received the letter of the Rev. G. C. Enson Bunster on the Eucharist, and in reply, I beg to inform him, that he will find all his objections answered in a letter of mine on that subject, and which will shortly appear in that excellent Periodical, the Orthodox Journal, addressed to the Rev. Wm. Palmer, of Worcester College, Oxford; and, in the mean time, I assert, without fear of contradiction, that among the tenets of the Catholic Church, which the authors and abettors of the pretended Reformation have thought fit to brand with the imputation of error, the article of the Real Presence of Christ's Body and Blood in the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, may be reputed one of the most fundamental; because, on the resolution of this single question is to be determined, whether the impeachment of Idolatry, which many of the Reformers are fond of fastening upon us for our adoration of Christ as really present in the venerable Sacrament of the Eucharist, has any appearance of equity and reason; or whether, on the contrary, we have not an undoubted right to retort on them the charge of ingratitude to God, as well as infidelity, for disbelieving and rejecting so singular and ineffable a blessing.

But be our Case, in this contested point, what it will, we have a principal and leading part of the Reformation sharers with us of our fate. For Luther, the first Patriarch of the Reformation, with his followers, is as sanguine for the Real Presence as the most zealous Catholic; and though (in explaining the mystery of his notion of Impanation, or a Consubstantiation of the Bread with Christ's Body, in lieu of a Transubstantiation, or a change of the substances, which is the Catholic belief,) he renders it more irreconcilable to reason, and unintelligible; yet he agrees with us in the main point of a Real and Corporal Presence; that is, in the very heart of the difficulty, in which it becomes a stumbling block and stone of offence to the rest of the Reformers. And such is his condescension in regard to the Catholic Tenet, as to think the disparity of opinions between him and us to be a matter of indifference. "I have taught," says he, "heretofore, and yet sustain, that it avails little, and" "is a question of no great moment, whether we believe the Bread to remain" "or not in the Eucharist, or to be Transubstantiated." (Luth. de Cæn. dom. Contra Zuing.) But it is certain that he does not shew himself so well affected to his Dissenting Brethren, the abettors of the Commemorative and Symbolical system, whom, on this head, he lashes with the severest censures, and the bitterest imprecations. In his *Confessio Parva*, wrote about a year before he died, he calls them "Blasphemers against God and Christ,—a pack of" "Liars,—Cursed Proud and Arrogant Spirits,—Bread-eaters,—Wine-drink-ers,—Soul-murderers!" And in a Tract written some time after the former, and when he was nearer his end, he repeats and confirms his aforesaid sentiments, in terms equally home and significant,—"We seriously think," says he, "the Zuinglians, and all the Sacramentarians, to be Heretics, and sepa- rated from GOD's Church, who deny the Body and Blood of Christ to be

"taken in the Mouth of our Body, in the blessed Sacrament." (Luth. Thes. Cont. Lovan. Thes. 2.)

In the mean while, in consequence of these material differences subsisting between the Reformers, the following apposite questions obviously occur to me.—First, I would desire to know if this Rev. Gentleman, or any other panegyrist of this Patriarch of the Reformation, how his and their hero's honour and orthodoxy are to be saved in this controverted point? For if the Catholics are here reprobable, how is he, who is in the same belief, as far as it is an object of exception and offence, both to him and to them, to be excused? And though his bold attack on the Papacy may gloss over his smaller slips, yet if the article in question is a gross error, and damnable idolatry, as he and all our opponents pretend, he is confessedly guilty of it, and therefore must be judged either to have wanted sagacity and inspiration to discover the error, or courage to impugn it—Blemishes of too black a dye to be admitted into the character of a head Reformer.

I would also beg leave, to put one other question.—Is the Reformation a human or divine work? that is, is it to be deemed a mere human device and invention, or as inspired, directed, and conducted by the Holy Ghost? He cannot, for shame, adopt it under the first notion; because, being put on that footing, its credit sinks, and forfeits at once its pretension to an Evangelical or Godly Reformation; and yet, on the other hand, for a work inconsistent with itself to come from God, is shocking to think, and blasphemy to utter. No,—a Fabric composed of repugnant incoherent parts, cannot have Almighty God for its architect. The Spirit of Wisdom and Truth could not possibly inspire contradictions, such as are the disparate opinions of the Reformers on the present question; viz. a Real Corporal Presence, tenaciously defended by Luther—a bare Remembrance or Commemoration, asserted by Zuinglius—a refinement on both, by Calvin, in his figurative Symbolical System—and an unintelligible Jargon of a Real Non-Corporal Presence, maintained by the Church of England. The Holy Ghost, I say, could not inspire such contradictions; if one system be true, the others must be undoubtedly false, or rather, all equally false—the products of innovating brains, big with invention. And in whatsoever other points these differences among the Reformers occur, the same unanswerable objections return upon them. It is the Catholic Church alone, having the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth for her guide, is always consistent with herself, uniform and unvariable in her doctrine, and as unchangeable in her Dogmas of Faith as the Divinity.

I reply to the last part of the Rev. G. C. E. Bunster's letter to me as follows: by boldly asserting that without the help of Tradition, we should not know how to Consecrate, how to give, how to receive,—in one word, how to Celebrate the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, no more than of Baptism; and by this we may understand with what good reason the Great Saint Basil said, "That in rejecting unwritten Tradition, the whole Fabric of the Church, "and of the Gospel itself, is shaken, and Preaching reduced to mere words, "in themselves unintelligible." (St. Basil de Sp. S. C. 17.) The saying of St. Augustine, mentioned in his Sermon to the "new baptised," recited by Fulgentius, is worthy of remark, (Baptism. Ethiop. Lat. Cap.; and Bede, in 1 Cor. x.) "Quod. "Vidistis panis est et Calix, quod Nobis etiam oculi "renunciant; Quod autem fides Vestra postulat instruenda, panis est Corpus "Christi, et Calix est Sanguis." "I say," says Bishop Stephen Gardiner, in his Dilection of the Devil's Sophistry, (fol. 12, A. D. 1546) "that if after "the words of Consecration the Consecrated host were so by God preserved "from injuries and violences of other Creatures, as that it could not be "broken, devoured, or Corrupted, it were such an outward Miracle, to the "open Confession of our Carnal Sense, as whereby to take away the Merit of "our Faith."



